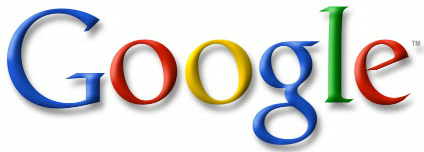
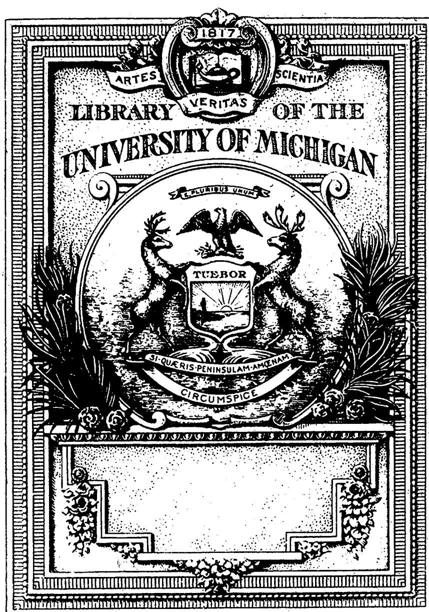


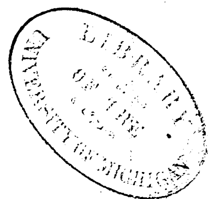

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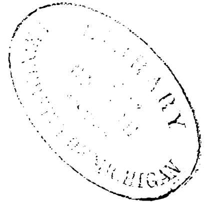


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Ghaut in the Himâlaya. See p. 5.



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THE HINDOOS.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF INDIA.

THE ancient and extensive empire of India[1] has from the remotest ages been an object of extraordinary curiosity to the inhabitants of all the more civilized portions of the world. In early antiquity, the Assyrian queen Semiramis is said to have made a fruitless attempt at subduing India; the conquests of Darius Hystaspis do not appear to have extended beyond the Panjâb (Herodot. iv. 44; compare iii. 101), and those of Alexander and of Seleucus made

[1] The origin of the name of India is altogether unknown; but, as Egypt derived its name from the ancient appellation of the Nile (Αἴγυπτος. Hom. Odyss. iv. 477, xvii. 427, and Eust. ad loc.), so many etymologists have imagined that India originally derived its name from the Indus. In Sanscrit, the name of that river is *Sindhu*, and its derivative *Saindhava* is the common adjective for whatever belongs to, or comes from the country along the Indus. The name became, probably, first known to the Greeks through the Persians, and a Sanscrit initial sibilant is often lost or changed into *h* in the corresponding words of the Persian and other cognate languages. Though properly confined to the provinces adjacent to the Indus, the acceptation of the term India was extended to the country east of that river as the knowledge of it advanced. A large province at the mouth of the Indus is still called Sinde; and Vincent supposes the present town of Sinde to be the Sindomana of Arrian (vi. 16). See Vincent's Voyage of Nearchus, p. 160. Lieutenant Burnes, however, is of opinion, that Sindomana is the present Sehwun. Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. iii. p. 138.

but a temporary impression. Even the Afghans, and the hardy barbarians of Tartary, who, under Baber, and other Mohammedan conquerors, effected a more permanent settlement in Hindoostan, appear to have almost immediately undergone a remarkable change both in character and manners. In a few ages their robust bodies and hardly-tempered minds yielded, like those of their predecessors, to the force of the warm enervating sun of India. They then became unable to preserve the conquests which they had made; and the descendants of Baber, Humaioon, and Akbar sunk under the dominion of a handful of daring strangers from the remotest islands of the West. These strangers, whose success affords the most extraordinary example on record of the triumph of knowledge and civilization over brute force, are now intrusted with the destinies of India, which forms, in the strictest sense of the word, a province of the British empire. The Hindoo therefore, though divided from us by a vast extent of sea and land, is our fellow-citizen; and for this reason we are deeply interested in comprehending his character, his manners, his religion, and the nature of the country which he inhabits.

The efforts of the ancients to open a commerce with India were more successful than their wars. For many ages before the expedition of Alexander, the costly and beautiful productions of this "garden of Asia" found their way through various channels to the west: its perfumes scented the tresses, and its jewels sparkled upon the bosoms of the women of Greece. Let us cast a hasty glance over its general physical aspect; and for this purpose imagine ourselves placed, with our face towards the north, on the extreme point of Cape Comorin, about eight degrees from the equinoctial line[2]. On the left hand the

[2] Malte-Brun, Géographie, tom. iv. p. 3, 4.

shores stretch away, through 16° of lat. to the mouths of the Indus, and on the right in a north-easterly direction, to where the Brahmaputra mingles its waters with those of the Ganges. From this point the Brahmaputra itself forms the boundary, until we approach the Himâlaya mountains, which, extending in a slightly fluctuating line towards the north-west, divide Bengal, Oude, Delhi, Lahore, and Cashmere from Tibet. On the west the Indus is the natural boundary of India, from the point where it issues through a break in the Himâlaya chain, to lat. 24° north, where it falls into the ocean[3]. The superficial extent of India has never been ascertained with any degree of exactness: but Hamilton, whose authority is of great weight, calculates it to be about one million two hundred and eighty thousand square miles[4]. This vast region contains the loftiest mountains, several of the largest and most celebrated rivers, and, side by side, the most fertile and the most barren spots on the surface of the globe. Of the mountains the principal are the Himâlaya[5], the eastern and western Ghauts, and the Vindhya chains, which run through the centre of the peninsula, parallel to the course of the Nerbudda[6]. The greater portion of the Himâlaya range has never been explored; the everlasting snow and clouds which rest upon its

[3] Ebn Haukal, Oriental Geography, p. 131—143; Pennant's Outlines of the Globe, vol. i. p. 3.

[4] Description of Hindostan, Introduction, p. 17.

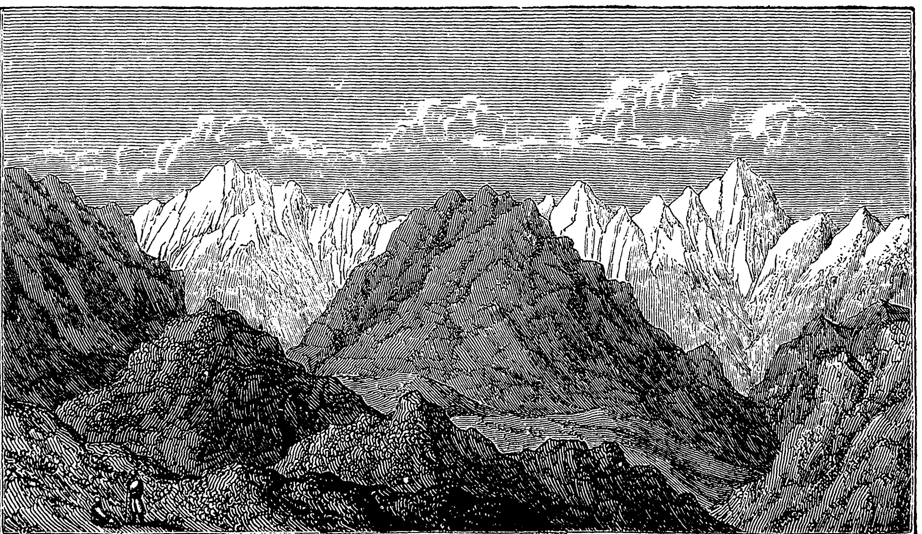
[5] The name of these mountains, which in Sanscrit signifies "the abode of snow, winter, or coldness," is sometimes written *Himmaleh,* conformably to the pronunciation in some of the present Indian dialects. To the Greeks and Romans the Himâlaya, or at least part of it, was known under the name of Imaus. Pliny was aware of the signification of the name: "Imaus incolarum lingua *nivosum* significans." Hist. Nat. vi. 17.

[6] Malte-Brun, tom. iv. p. 10.

summit render it extremely difficult of access. But it has been ascertained that one of the peaks of this chain, denominated Dhawalagiri, near the source of the Gunduk river, is the most elevated spot upon the habitable globe; being twenty-six thousand eight hundred and sixty-two feet above the level of the sea. It is in the untrodden solitudes of these mountains, where the scream of the eagle, the roar of torrents and tempests, and the thunder of the avalanche are the only sounds ever heard, that the superstitious Hindoo has placed his heaven on the summit of Mount Meru[7]. Here too, when weary of life, he comes to the rock, in shape resembling a bullock's rump, and supposed to be the petrified body of a god, to precipitate himself over the holy crag, and enter heaven by force.

The Ghauts (passages or gates, as they are expressively termed) commence in the plains about Coimbatore, in the southern portion of the Dekkan, and, diverging east and west, form, like the shores, the two sides of a triangle, the apex of which points towards Cape Comorin. The eastern Ghauts extend in a north-easterly direction seventy miles beyond Madras, and are only intersected by narrow defiles well lined with fortresses. The northern portion of this chain divides the Circars from the province of Berar, and is exceedingly rugged, precipitous, and difficult of access. Formed of naked granite, the summit of this ridge presents to the adventurous traveller the most dreary and desolate picture that can be imagined. In the rainy season, torrents of fearful volume and rapidity, dashing down through the dark and barren abysses of the mountains, sweep away every thing before them; but in that portion of the year, which in these countries may be termed summer, the

[7] See below, the section of this work on the religion, &c. of India.



Page 4. Bheem ka Udar: a View in the Himâlaya Mountains.

sun glares in unmitigated brightness upon the rocks, washed as clean as the steps of a temple by the monsoon rains, and renders them painful to be looked upon. It was this dazzling appearance which led the natives to bestow upon the range the name of Ellacooda, or the White Mountains [8].

The western Ghauts, of greater elevation and more picturesque appearance than the eastern, extend northward along the Malabar coast, at a short distance from the sea, and traversing Canara and Bejapore, and passing near Goa, enter the Mahratta country, where they branch off into numerous small ridges. Differing almost entirely from the eastern chain, these mountains are intersected by numerous deep ravines, through which many streams of water descend to the plains, while thick forests of the magnificent trees of the tropics clothe the summits and acclivities with a deep covering of verdure. At the feet of this amphitheatrical sweep of mountains the numerous towns and villages of Malabar glitter in the sun, and overlook the broad blue expanse of the Indian Ocean. Between these two chains of the Ghauts lies the plateau or table-land of the Dekkan,

[8] Malte-Brun, tom. iv. p. 9. "We are not informed," says Hamilton, "of the exact height of this ridge, but its general elevation is known to be considerably less than that of the western Ghauts. About the latitude of Madras, which is the highest part, it is estimated at three thousand feet; and the table-land of Bangalore, towards Ooscottah, which is within the chain, is more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea. As the rivers which have their sources in the upper table-land universally decline to the east, it proves the superior elevation of the western Ghauts, and they are by far the most abrupt in their ascent. The chief component part of these mountains is a granite, consisting of white feldspar and quartz, with dark green mica in a small proportion to the other two ingredients; the particles are angular, and of a moderate size. The rocks appear stratified, but the strata are very much broken and confused." Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 249,

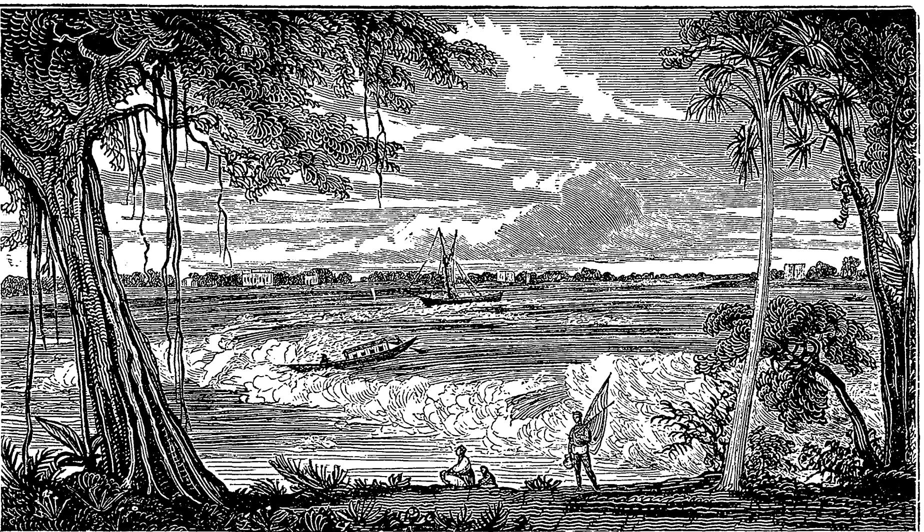
which breaks rapidly off in the western, and slopes down gradually in the eastern Ghauts, and extends in the north beyond the Nerbudda, where the Vindhya mountains mark its farthest projection towards the plains of Hindoostan.

The rivers of India have always been more celebrated than its mountains. Every person throughout the civilized world is familiar with the names of the Indus and the Ganges, those holy streams [9], which seem to the superstitious Hindoo, as the Nile appeared to the Egyptian, to be of divine origin. They are certainly among the most precious gifts which nature has bestowed upon Hindoostan. By their means, and that of numerous tributary or inferior rivers, an amazing degree of fertility is maintained in the country, which from time immemorial has not only supported a vast population with its own produce, but been enabled to satisfy the wants of the rest of the world with its superfluities [10]. To us in England it is difficult to form an idea of those "ocean streams," which in a course, in some instances, of nearly two thousand miles collect the waters of a thousand rivers, and at length flow in channels of several leagues in breadth to the sea [11]. In the level lands of Bengal rivers cannot of course possess very lofty banks; but palaces, temples, and palm trees of gigantic size shoot up from the water's edge, and are visible from a great distance; yet, in sailing up or down these majestic streams, the eye is frequently unable to descry the opposite banks. Except in the rainy season the sur-

[9] Gangâ, or the goddess of the Ganges, is supposed to have sprung from the head of Siva. See Râmâyana, b. i. c. 26. Among the Egyptians the Nile was a principal divinity, and was denominated *the mimic of heaven*. Creuzer, Religions de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 385; Egypt and Mohammed Ali, vol. i. p. 228.

[10] See Vincent's Periplus of the Erythræan Sea, p. 353—469, and Robertson's Dissertation, p. 54—57.

[11] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 12, 13.



Page 8. The Bore: coming in of the Tide on the Ganges.

face of the rivers, rarely ruffled with winds, is as smooth as a mirror, and beautifully reflects the glorious hues which dawn or sunset spreads over the tropical skies, with the lazy lingering sail floating over it. Towards the mouth, however, this tranquillity is twice a day disturbed by the tide, which, particularly in the Indus, rushes with great violence against the stream with what is commonly called the *mascaret* or *bore*, endangering the barks which encounter it. It was this phenomenon that astonished the soldiers of Alexander[12], who, accustomed to the tideless wave of the Mediterranean, knew not how to account for this war of waters, which even modern travellers have described with wonder.

The most celebrated river of Hindoostan is the Indus[13] (in Sanscrit, Sindhu), which was known from the very earliest ages to the ancient world. Its sources, like those of the western Nile, have hitherto eluded the scrutiny of man, but they certainly lie beyond the Himâlaya range, and are supposed to be situated in the northern declivity of the Cailas branch of these mountains, about lat. 31° 20′ N. and long. 80° 30′ E., near the town of Gortope, in a country

[12] Arrian, Exped. Alex. vi. 19.

[13] Though the breadth of the Indus does not, perhaps, quite correspond with the great length of its course, it is still very considerable. " After the Fulalee rejoins the Indus, the course is for some miles south, at last deviating to the southwest, in which direction it may be said to enter the ocean in one large volume. As it approaches the estuary, several minor streams branch off from the main trunk, but they never reach the sea, being absorbed by the sands of the desert, lost in an enormous salt morass, or abstracted by the natives for agricultural uses. From the sea up to Hyderabad the Indus is, in general, about a mile in breadth, varying in depth from two to five fathoms; at Lahore Bunder it is four miles broad; still further down, at Dharajay Bunder, nine miles; and, at the extreme of the land, twelve miles from shore to shore." Hamilton, vol. i. p. 481.

now subject to China. Not far from the same spot are the lake of Ravan-hrad, and the sources of the Setlej (in Sanscrit, Satadru); farther to the east are those of the Brahmaputra; and, nearly opposite, on the southern side of the Himâlaya, the sacred Ganges itself issues from the roots of the mountains. For many hundred miles from its source the course of the Indus is unknown, but it is supposed to flow towards the N.N.W., through a desolate unexplored country. From Drâs, a town of Little Tibet, down to the ocean, its course has been ascertained and described, though not with that accuracy and minuteness which the subject seems to demand. For more than two hundred miles from the above-mentioned town, the Indus receives no accession from any other stream. At Mullai, however, the Abaseen precipitates itself into it immediately after its escape from the dreary solitudes of the greater Hindoo Koosh, among the frightful chasms and precipices of the inferior range of which it still continues to flow for fifty miles, and then emerges at Torbaila, into the valley of Chuch, over whose broad bosom it diffuses its waters in the midst of innumerable little green islands. Having been joined by the Caubul river, about forty miles farther down, it enters the Soliman mountains, and forces its way with vast noise and violence through a rocky precipitous channel. In this part of its course the sound of its waters has been compared to the roaring of a tempestuous sea; and when the melting of the snows of the Hindoo Koosh increases the volume of the stream, a tremendous whirlpool is produced, in which the frail barks of the natives are frequently sunk or dashed to pieces. At Attock, on the road to Caubul, the Indus is only two hundred and sixty yards wide; but it is very deep and rapid, and in great floods reaches the top of a bastion, thirty-five or forty feet above the ordinary level. Between Attock and the

ocean it is augmented by the waters of the Toë, the Koorum, the Aral, and the Panjnad[14], or united stream of the five rivers of the Panjâb. These rivers are the Jhylum or Behut (the Hydaspes of the ancients), the Chenâb (or Acesines), the Ravee (or Hydraotes), the Beyah (or Hyphasis), and the Setlej (or Hesudrus); though greatly celebrated both in ancient and modern history, they are not sufficiently important to require a separate description. The country through which they flow is called from

[14] Lieutenant Burnes observes that this name has been erroneously given to the Chenâb or Acesines after it has gathered the other rivers. Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. iii. p. 289. The same traveller gives the following account of the means which the Raja of Lahore has used of late years to transport his army to the right bank of the Indus at Attock, and which Lieutenant Burnes heard from his officers. "Runjeet Singh retains a fleet of thirty-seven boats at Attock for the construction of a bridge across the river, which is only two hundred and sixty yards wide. The boats are anchored in the stream a short distance from one another; and the communication is completed by planks and covered with mud. Immediately below the fortress of Attock, twenty-four boats only are required; but at other places in the neighbourhood as many as thirty-seven are used. Such a bridge can only be thrown across the Indus from November to April, on account of the velocity of the stream being comparatively diminished at that season; and even then the manner of fixing the boats seems incredible. Skeleton frame-works of wood, filled with stone to the weight of two hundred and fifty maunds, and bound together strongly by ropes, are let down from each boat, to the number of four or six, though the depth exceeds thirty fathoms, and these are constantly strengthened by others to prevent accident. Such a bridge has been completed in three days, but six is the more usual period; and we are much struck with the singular coincidence between this manner of constructing a bridge, and that described by Arrian (v. 7), when Alexander crossed the Indus. He there mentions his belief regarding Alexander's bridge at Attock, and except that the skeleton frame-works are described as huge wicker-baskets, the modern and ancient manner of crossing the river is the same." Ibid. p. 140, 141.

their number, the Panjâb, that is, "the region of the five rivers." "The tides," observes Lieut. Burnes, "rise in the mouths of the Indus about nine feet at full moon, and flow and ebb with great violence, particularly near the sea, when they flood and abandon the banks with equal and incredible velocity;" but he adds that they are only perceptible seventy-five miles from the sea. Those mouths of the Indus which are least favoured by the fresh water, are, according to the remark of the same traveller, most accessible to large vessels from the sea, for they are more free from sand-banks, which the river-waters, when rushing with violence, never fail to raise.

Of all the rivers of India the Ganges[15] is the most sacred. It is, in the estimation of the natives, a deity; and the most secure way to heaven is through

[15] Mr. Colebrooke has given, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. xi. p. 429—445, an interesting history of the attempts which have at various times been made to explore the sources of the Ganges. Of these geographical expeditions the first was undertaken, in 1711, by two Lamas, who were commissioned by the Emperor of China to travel into Tibet for the purpose of constructing a map of the country from Si-miy to Lasa, and thence to the source of the Ganges, some of the water of which they were instructed to bring back with them to Peking. From the materials which they collected the map of Tibet, published by Duhalde, was prepared. Wars and revolutions, however, prevented them from completing their task, and the best information they were able to acquire was exceedingly imperfect. The Catholic missionaries at the court of Pekin being desirous of submitting this map to some European geographer, D'Anville undertook to examine and correct it. But he was not in possession of sufficient materials for the purpose; and accordingly his labours, like those of the Lamas, were full of errors. These were animadverted on, but not corrected, by Major Rennell and Anquetil Duperron. Other attempts to determine the point, whether the Ganges actually rises on the northern or southern side of the Himâlaya, were equally unsuccessful, until in 1818 an expedition, projected by Colonel Colebrooke and conducted by Captains Raper and Hearsay, settled the long agitated

its waters. Hence, whenever this is possible, the Hindoo comes to its banks to die, and piously carries thither his parents or relations, to ensure their eternal happiness. With the converse of the feelings of the

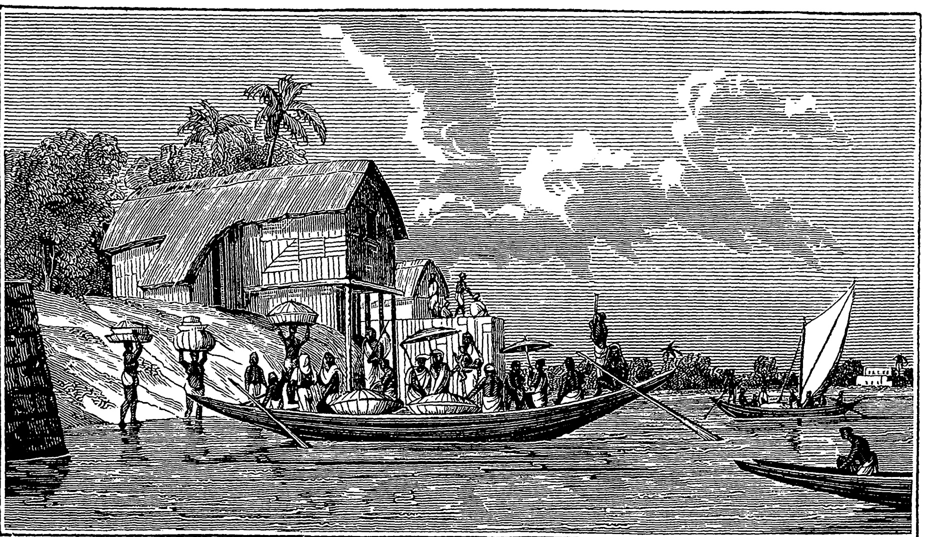
question. The party arrived on the 1st of April at Haridwâra, but did not themselves proceed to Gangotri, owing to the near approach of the rainy season. An intelligent native was sent forward, who arriving at Gangotri, the place where the river issues from the Himâlaya, found the breadth of the stream to be about forty cubits, and not exceeding two in depth, with scarcely any current. From this point he continued to ascend the stream, occasionally perceiving the course of the river in the snow; but at the distance of three miles its channel was so encumbered with snow that it could neither be seen nor heard, while the superincumbent snow being soiled appeared like a cultivated field. Proceeding five hundred yards further, he again saw the sacred stream appear; but here his progress was stopped, for in front arose a steep mountain like a huge wall, from an angle of which the Ganges appeared to issue; but this was only conjecture, as the goddess here veils her head in an impenetrable mass of snow. This spot was found by observation to be twelve thousand nine hundred and fourteen feet above the level of the sea. This is the most sacred source, and it is here that the offerings of the pilgrims are made; but the Dauli and Alacananda rivers, which, with this, the Bhâgîrat'hî, form the Ganges, have a longer course and rise still higher in the snows of the Himâlaya. The source of the Alacananda, explored by the English officers themselves, was very similar to that of the Bhâgîrat'hî. Vast beds of snow, seventy or eighty feet in thickness, obstructed the ascent, and sometimes concealed the river. "We are now," say the travellers, "completely surrounded by hoary tops, on which snow eternally rests, and blights the roots of vegetation. The lower parts of the hills produce verdure and small trees. About midway the fir rears its lofty head; but the summits, repelling each nutritious impulse, are veiled in garments of perpetual whiteness." "At twelve o'clock we reached the extremity of our journey, opposite to a waterfall called Barsû Dhârâ. It falls from the summit upon a projecting ledge, about two hundred feet high, where it divides into two streams, which descend, in drifting showers of spray, upon a bed of snow, where the particles immediately become congealed. The small quantity that dissolves undermines the bed, whence it issues in a small

Gheber, who would consider the eternal fire—the object of his worship—polluted by the touch of a corpse, the Hindoo casts the dead naked into the sacred stream; so that those who sail upon the Ganges frequently meet with corpses, floating down in various stages of corruption and decay towards the sea. This stream rises, as we have before observed, in the Himâlaya mountains, on the Indian side of the range. It very soon becomes of considerable depth, and navigable for the light barks of the country, but before its confluence with the Jumna (or Yamuna)[16] it is fordable in many places. The depth of the Ganges is not greatly influenced by the melting of the snows; yet its bed is very uncertain, changing after every rainy season, and shallows are frequent in it. Like most tropical rivers it overflows the surrounding plains, in some places for more than a hundred miles in extent; at which time nothing is visible but the lofty palm trees, the villages, which are built on

stream about two hundred paces below. This place forms the boundary of the pilgrims' devotions; some few come hither for the purpose of being sprinkled by this holy shower-bath.

"From this spot the direction of the Alacananda is perceptible to the S.W. extremity of the valley, distant about one mile; but its current is entirely concealed under immense heaps of snow, which have most probably been accumulating for ages in its channel. Beyond this point travellers have not dared to venture; and although the Sastras mention a place called Alacapura, whence the river derives its source and name, the position or existence of it is as much obscured in doubt and fable as any other part of their mythological history." Asiatic Researches, vol. xi. p. 524.

[16] The sources of the Jumna, in the immediate neighbourhood of the hot springs of Jumnotri (long. 78° 24′ E. lat. 30° 55′), were visited in 1816 by Mr. James Baillie Fraser, who has described them in his Journal of a Tour in the Himâlaya mountains, p. 428, &c.; and again, in 1828, by Captain Johnson, who, on the 12th of May, found them issuing from a snow-bed, at an elevation of 10,840 feet above the level of the sea. See Journal of the Royal Geog. Soc. vol. iii. p. 49—70.



Page 12. Ferry-Boat on the Ganges.

elevated sites, and a few mounds, the sites of ruined hamlets. Travelling is at this period performed in boats, in which the Hindoo skims over his rice fields and gardens, which are then imbibing the moisture necessary to their fertility. The prospect is singular but monotonous, as every field is similar to the next, and the appearance of the country upon the subsiding of the waters is any thing but picturesque. At the distance of five hundred miles from the sea the Ganges is thirty feet deep at low water, and never becomes shallow, till at its mouth bars and banks of sand, thrown up by the contending waters of the rivers and the sea, choke its channel, and render it unnavigable to large vessels. At the distance of two hundred miles from the ocean the river separates into two branches; the eastern, which flows towards the south-east, retaining the original appellation, and the western branch, which, being joined by another stream that separates from the main river, assumes the name of the Hooghly. Upon the latter, which is navigable by the largest ships, Calcutta, the British capital of India, is situated. The southern border of the Delta, lying between these two branches of the Ganges, and intersected by innumerable smaller channels, is called the Sunderbunds, which, covered with rank impenetrable thickets or jungles, the haunt of tigers and other wild animals, extend for about two hundred miles along the shore. Though the melting of the snow contributes but little to the rise of the Ganges, it is considerably increased by the rains which fall in the mountainous districts during the month of June, by the end of which it has frequently risen twenty-five feet. At this time the rainy season has scarcely begun in the plains of Bengal, but in the course of July the monsoon rains deluge the country, and the river rises thirty-two feet above its ordinary level. The waters then begin to fall, and from this time to

April continue gradually decreasing, until the river sinks to what may be termed its lowest level.

The Brahmaputra, which has its source at no great distance towards the east of the lake Mânasa-Sarovara in Tibet, near the sources of the Setlej and the Indus, is, perhaps, the largest river of India. At first it flows eastward, and almost parallel to the ridge of the Himâlaya, through Tibet, where it is called the Sanpo. It afterwards makes a bend, turns through Assam towards Bengal, and, joining the Ganges at Luckipoor, falls into the ocean, after a course of about one thousand seven hundred miles. Much uncertainty, however, still prevails about the course of this river. The identity of the Sanpo of Tibet with the Brahmaputra has recently been questioned by Klaproth, who was induced, by a passage in the great Imperial Geography of China, to suppose that the Sanpo, instead of turning towards the west, emptied its waters into the Irawaddy; but the information recently collected by Lieutenant Wilcox in Assam and the adjacent countries, is not in favour of this hypothesis[17].

The principal rivers of the peninsula of India are the Mahanadi, Godavery, Krishna, and Cavery, which flow from west to east, following the slope of the table-land of the Dekkan; and, farther north, the Taptee and Nerbudda, which run in an opposite direction from east to west, and pour their waters into the gulf of Cambay. A few other rivers of less importance will be noticed in the description of the provinces of India.

In India there is, properly speaking, neither spring nor autumn, summer nor winter. There are but two seasons—the rainy and the dry. The former continues in the interior and the western parts of the peninsula from April or May to the end of October;

[17] Asiatic Researches, vol. xvii. p. 314, &c.

and the remainder of the year is generally without a shower or a cloud. During this dry season the sun gradually burning up every plant and blade of grass on the plains, causes the whole surface of the country, excepting the forests and the jungles, to appear like a field from which the green sward has been pared away. Baked hard by the sun, the clayey soil cracks, and exhibits broad fissures, sometimes of several feet deep. Travelling then becomes extremely irksome, as, besides the heat and the barrenness of the prospect, clouds of dust are frequently raised by the winds and drifted about with extraordinary velocity. But the rapidity with which these apparently barren plains are clothed with verdure on the setting in of the rains has the appearance of a miracle; a single night almost sufficing to call forth the slumbering plants and grasses, and to transform the dusty plain into a fertile meadow.

This beautiful vegetation, however, is in the lowlands extremely short-lived; for, by the almost universal inundation that ensues, the meadows are covered with water[18]. A thick canopy of clouds,

[18] The setting in of the south-west monsoon is thus admirably described by Mr. Elphinstone:—"After some threatening days the sky assumes a troubled appearance in the evenings, and the monsoon sets in generally during the night. It is attended by such a thunder-storm as can scarcely be imagined by those who have only seen that phenomenon in a temperate climate. It generally begins with violent blasts of wind, which are succeeded by floods of rain. For some hours lightning is seen almost without intermission; sometimes it only illuminates the sky and shows the clouds near the horizon; at others it discovers the distant hills, and again leaves all in darkness, when in an instant it reappears in vivid and successive flashes, and exhibits the nearest objects in all the brightness of day. During all this time the distant thunder never ceases to roll, and is only silenced by some nearer peal, which bursts on the ear with such a sudden and tremendous crash as can scarcely fail to strike the most insensible heart with awe." Account of the Kingdom of Caubul.

through which the rays of the sun can seldom force their way for a moment, hangs during weeks together over the country, dissolving in incessant torrents of rain, and renewed every moment by fresh masses of vapour from the ocean. The commencement and conclusion of the rainy season are marked by tremendous storms of thunder, especially the termination, when the winds are shifting about from the south to the northward, to roll away the heavy vapours from the land. During the continuance of the rains, when it might be expected that the air would possess a delicious freshness, a sultry and oppressive heat is frequently experienced, more overpowering than the far higher temperature of the dry season. But, notwithstanding these inconveniences, it is the rains alone that render India a habitable country; their partial discontinuance produces famine, and their disappearance would, in the space of a few years, change the whole peninsula into a desert [19].

Though India is situated chiefly within the torrid zone it contains almost every variety of climate; some of its districts being insufferably hot, while others are uninhabitable from cold. In some parts, as in the Circars, the rains are said to continue eight months, while in others on the same coast they last only two. Bengal is subject to extreme vicissitudes, from incessant rains to intolerable heat, and from an atmosphere of dazzling clearness to heavy and unwholesome fogs [20]. It is, consequently, an insalubrious country. The coast of Coromandel is drier

[19] On the climate, &c. of India, see Tieffenthaler, tom. i.; Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire; Pennant's Outlines of the Globe; Malte-Brun's Geography; and Hamilton's excellent Description, *passim*.

[20] Gladwin's Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal. Abul Fazl, however, describes the climate of Bengal as "very temperate." Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 5.

and hotter than that of Malabar, where, in districts in which narrow defiles and thick forests prevail, there are many unhealthy parts. In general, the high waste lands, the country between the Jumna and the Ganges and the Panjâb, notwithstanding its multitude of streams and rivers, are blessed with a more cool and salubrious atmosphere[21]; and the island of Bombay, once termed the "grave of Europeans," is now comparatively healthy[22]. The great wastes between the Indus and Guzerat greatly resemble in aridity and barrenness the deserts of Arabia; but they produce none of those hardy tribes which render the Arabian wilderness the abode of independence and liberty. In some of those wastes, as in that between Boodupoor and Almora, thorny briars and resinous shrubs are said to abound[23], but in the greater number nothing but low sandy hills is to be seen; while clouds of sand, raised by the hot winds of the south, darken the atmosphere, and often bury the houses and cultivated fields that skirt the confines of the desert. The wastes and the rocky chains of mountains that traverse the peninsula in various directions, are nearly the only uncultivated spots, the remainder being covered with rich meadows, pasture lands and rice fields, gardens or woods.

The principal alimentary plants of India are rice (of which there are twenty-seven varieties), wheat, barley, maize, millet, dhourra, and badchera or bajera (Panicum spiculatum). Peas, beans, lentils, *moong* or *mudga* (Phaseolus Mungo), *tauna*, *toor* (Cytisus cajan), and *toll* (the last four unknown in Europe), are its ordinary legumes. Pine-apples and melons of the most delicious flavour are common in most of the

21 Forster's Journey from Bengal to Petersburgh.

22 Grose's Voyage to India.

23 Tieffenthaler, vol. i. p. 102; Colonel Tod's Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 693.

provinces; the lotus (Nelumbium speciosum), and the water-lily (Nymphæa alba), abound in the vicinity of the lakes and rivers; the *katchil*, a root white on the inside and black on the surface; the *arachis, hypogæa*, or *moogfully;* and the *igname*, which frequently weighs several pounds, supply the place of the potato [24].

The flowers of India are innumerable, and in many instances of extraordinary beauty. To describe these minutely is the province of the botanist, but in our survey of the natural productions of the country we cannot wholly pass them over. The first of flowers in India, as elsewhere, is the rose, which, besides furnishing poets and lovers with the most beautiful of similes, produces the attar [25], that exquisite essence which in sweetness surpasses every other substance in the world. As the manufacturing of the attar is an object of much importance, immense fields of roses are cultivated in the neighbourhood of Lucknow [26], Ghâzeepore, and in Cashmere, where in spring

[24] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 29. Bishop Heber found celery growing wild in great abundance on the banks of the Ganges, near Dacca, vol. i. p. 174; and numerous wild pine-apples in Ceylon, though these latter are said to be poisonous, vol. iii. p. 143. Pennant, however, who observes that the pine-apple is found wild in Celebes, Amboyna, and even in the Philippine Islands, makes no allusion to its poisonous quality, vol. i. p. 221; and Rumphius, lib. viii. c. 41.

[25] The mode of extracting the essence of roses is said to have been accidentally discovered by the favourite sultana of Jehanghir. To please the voluptuous emperor, she caused the bath in the garden of the palace to be filled to the brim with rose-water, and the action of the sun concentrated the oily particles which were found floating upon the water. Supposing the water had become corrupt, the attendants carefully skimmed away the oily matter, in doing which they burst the little globules, and found that they emitted the most delicious odour. This suggested the idea of artificially procuring the essence by imitating the process of nature.

[26] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 332—336.

and summer the air is deeply impregnated with a delicious odour. The koonja, a fine species of white rose, perfumes the vales of Delhi and Serinagur; and Orissa boasts of its *nusreen*, a flower of a delicate form and exquisite odour, whose leaves are white on the outside and yellow within [27]. To these may be added the large flowering jasmine; the *atimukta;* the *champaca* (Michelia champaca), with which the Hindoos adorn their hair and perfume their clothes; the *ixora*, a shrub six feet in height, whose round rich clusters of scarlet flowers so nearly resemble burning coals that it has been called "the flame of the woods [28];" and the *mussænda frondosa*, which uncloses its beautiful flowers at four in the afternoon and folds them up again at the same hour in the morning [29].

But the vegetable productions of India are not merely remarkable for their beauty or fragrance; the country possesses numerous plants which promote the comfort and luxury, and preserve or restore the health of mankind. Among these the chief are cotton, flax, hemp, opium, indigo, tobacco, saffron, betel, sesamum, jalap, and sarsaparilla. Cardamom is produced in the

[27] Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 12. The flora of Ceylon is still richer, perhaps, than that of the continent. Mrs. Heber, vol. iii. p. 144, observes that the gloriosa superba, the amaryllis, and other beautiful flowers grow there in profusion; and adds, "in many places the trees appear to stand on a carpet of flowers."

[28] "Flamma sylvarum," Rumphius, lib. vi. c. 52; Ixora coccinea, Lina.

[29] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 29, attributes this property to the *sindrimal*, but without giving his authorities. It is clear, however, from Pennant and Knox that the *mussænda* must be meant. This shrub is called by the Malays "the leaf of the princess," because their ladies are fond of the grateful odour of its white leaves. Many people transplant it from the woods into their gardens, and use it as a dial or clock, especially in cloudy weather. Pennant's Outlines of the Globe, vol. i. p. 219; Knox's Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon, p. 20.

hills of Oude, about the roots of the Ghauts, and in Malabar; pepper in Malabar, Bengal, Bahar, and Ceylon; and cotton in nearly all the mountainous districts, though the best is said to come from Bengal and the Coromandel coast, where likewise the finest cotton goods are manufactured. The banks of the rivers and lakes or marshes, and generally all the moist low lands of India, are for the most part covered with forests of bamboo, a species of cane which frequently attains the height of sixty feet[30]. These bamboo forests, which swarm with monkeys, are the retreat of tigers and other large beasts of prey. The bamboo is an evergreen, and is applied to numerous useful purposes by the natives: with this they construct their light rude dwellings as well as the framework of a species of boat, resembling the coracles or *vitilia navigia* of the ancient Britons[31]. The joints of the cane are used as pitchers for carrying water, and in China bamboos are employed as pipes for conveying water from one part of a town to the other. Paper, mats, poles for palankeens, &c. are also made of bamboo. The sugar-cane has been cultivated in Bengal from remote antiquity[32]. Palm trees of all

[30] Pennant asserts that the bamboo grows to so prodigious a height that it overtops all the trees of the forest. Outlines, &c. vol. i. p. 144. Though the bamboo shoots up to a greater height in a moist soil, it is stouter, healthier, and better timber when it grows in warm, dry, or rocky situations. Bishop Heber's Journal, vol. i. p. 264; Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 7.

[31] Hyder Ali carried about with him in all his campaigns a great number of these light boats, the frames of which were borne by two men, while two others carried the skins with which they were covered when used. One of these boats was capable of containing twenty-eight men or a piece of cannon; and in a quarter of an hour a small fleet of this description could be launched on any lake or river which obstructed his march. Hist. of Hyder Ali, vol. i. p. 116.

[32] Hamilton observes that the sugar-cane was introduced from India into Arabia, and from thence into Europe and Africa.

varieties are abundantly produced in the plains of Hindoostan, and communicate a character of sombre grandeur to its landscapes; and the *ficus Indica*, the Areca nut tree, and the banana, increase the riches, while they add to the beauty of the country. The northern provinces produce the apple, the pear, the plum, the apricot, the orange, with other European fruits; and the mango, the guava, and the bread fruit are found in the south. Nearly all the forest trees of Europe abound in the forests of India, together with teak and other species of timber peculiar to that and the neighbouring countries. Ceylon produces the ebony, so much valued by the ancients; and according to the Ayeen Akbery, this precious wood is also found on the banks of the Ganges[33]. In the Dekkan and in the island of Ceylon are found the red sandal tree, gamboge, gum lac, the species of laurel which produces camphor, cassia, and mace; and the cinnamon tree[34], once supposed to have been indigenous in Arabia.

In mineral productions India is inferior to no country on the surface of the globe. Gold, silver, and precious stones abound in many parts of the empire; and, as the ancients correctly reported, its

Even the derivation of the name *sugar* is in favour of the supposition that this commodity was first introduced into the western countries from India. The Sanscrit word for sugar is *sarkarâ*, whence the Persian *shakar* and *shakkar*, the Arabic *sokkar*, the Greek σάκχαρ, σάκχαρι, σάκχαρον, the Latin *saccharum*, &c.

33 Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 36.

34 Dr. Vincent, App. to the Periplus of the Erythræan Sea, article 37, lavishes a profusion of learning to prove that the κασία of the Greeks, and the *kinnamon besem* of the Hebrews, was the same with our cinnamon, *i. e.* the bark in pipes. The Greeks, he observes, having no direct communication with the East, received the cinnamon from the Phœnicians, to whom it was conveyed through Arabia. Dioscorides, with other writers of antiquity, erroneously supposed it to be the produce of Arabia.

rivers, in many instances, literally roll down their waters over golden sands[35]. Diamonds of great beauty and magnitude are found in Bundelkund, Berar, Vizapoor, Balaghaut, the Carnatics, and several other provinces; as are also sapphires, onyxes, amethysts, rubies, rock crystals, marbles, and alabaster[36]. Lapis-lazuli, supposed to be the sapphire of the ancients, is found in the Beloor Tâg and Hindoo Koosh; and rock salt, common salt, coal, sulphur, nitre, and naphtha abound both in the northern and southern provinces, but particularly on the Coromandel coast and in the kingdom of Guzerat.

To the natural historian we abandon the task of enumerating and minutely describing the vast multitude of animals which nature has congregated on the plains and in the forests of Hindoostan. In our rapid glance over the country and its productions, our attention can be arrested only by the most prominent objects; and, in the present instance, it will perhaps be sufficient to observe, that in the extensive woods and jungles of this extraordinary region the principle of life appears to be developed with singular activity. Animals of the hugest bulk, of the fiercest propensities, and of properties the most destructive, are here found in fellowship with the smallest, the mildest, and the least hurtful of created things. The elephant, the rhinoceros, the lion[37], the tiger, the

[35] Tieffenthaler, tom. i. p. 222, 274, and tom. ii. p. 269; Hamilton, Introd. vol. i. p. 21.

[36] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 35; Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 36.

[37] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 38, asserts that the lion is now unknown in India: this is a mistake. The large long-maned lion now in the Tower of London was caught in Bengal, while a cub, by General Watson, who, on his return to this country in 1823, presented it to the King. Tower Menagerie, p. 7, 8. Bishop Heber, a diligent and able inquirer, observes upon this subject, that "the lion, which was long supposed to be unknown in India, is now ascertained to exist in considerable numbers in the districts of Saharunpoor and Loadianah," vol. ii. p. 149. He

hyæna, and the wolf inhabit the same forests and haunt the same plains as the camel, the ass, the antelope, the sheep, the rabbit, and the squirrel. Horses are neither numerous nor of a fine breed in Hindoostan; but the elephant, the camel, and the sheep are indigenous to the soil, and are still found wild in various districts. Naturalists speak of a diminutive breed of oxen in Ceylon and the neighbourhood of Surat no larger than a Newfoundland dog, which, though fierce of aspect, are trained to draw children in their little carts. There is a species of sheep, on the other hand, so high and strong, that, when properly saddled and bridled, the animals serve instead of ponies, and carry children of twelve years of age[38]. In the woods to the north of Bengal there is said to be a species of buffalo, which, from the tip of the horns to the ground, measures fourteen feet[39].

Serpents have ever been the objects of the peculiar hatred and disgust of mankind. Among many nations they have been the symbol of the evil principle, and, when their abject fears have led men to worship what they dreaded, have been adored as deities. In Hindoostan, where nearly fifty species[40] of these deadly reptiles lie in wait for the destruction of man, a coiled serpent forms the couch of the god Vishnu, and is the frequent attendant on others of their deities. But the boa, which sometimes attains the length of forty feet, is dignified with divine attributes, consulted as an oracle, and worshipped as a god. Serpents of smaller dimensions, but equally dangerous and de-

likewise adds, that lions, as large as those of Africa, have been killed on this side the Ganges, in the neighbourhood of Moradabad and Rampoor in Rohilcund.

[38] Pennant, Outlines of the Globe, vol. i. p. 101.

[39] Pennant's Outlines, &c. vol. ii. p. 241; Ker's Animal Kingdom, vol. ii. p. 747.

[40] Forty-six, according to Lacepède.

structive, swarm in every forest, thicket, and garden, creep into the bed-rooms, twist themselves between the lattices of the windows, and nestle in the folds of the turban. Of these the most venomous are the *cobra de capello*, or hooded snake, which grows to the length of eight or nine feet[41]; the *cobra manilla*, a little blue snake, about a foot in length, which haunts old walls, and whose poison causes death in a quarter of an hour; and the *cobra de aurellia*, a serpent about the size of a quill, and not more than six inches long, whose bite causes madness and death[42]. The charming of serpents, which in India is a no less useful than curious profession, furnishes employment to a particular caste or tribe of men[43].

The crocodiles of India are not inferior in size to those of Egypt and Ethiopia, growing frequently to the length of thirty feet. They abound in the great rivers, lakes, and marshes, and for their brutal fierceness and peculiar fondness for human flesh, have sometimes been nourished in great numbers in the ditches of fortified places, as a kind of garrison[44]. There is a peculiar species of this animal, with an excrescence in the form of a ball upon its nose, found in the Ganges. Another species, about twelve feet long, always appears in the tanks after the annual

[41] Pennant's View of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 197. "The Indian jugglers," says this author, "especially those of Malabar, have a power of taming these dreadful animals, and instructing them to dance, after the inharmonious and slow air of their flageolets."

[42] Pennant's View of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 101.

[43] Nouveaux Rapports des Missions de Halle, cap. 43, p. 648, 656.

[44] The city of Bejapore, or Vizapoor, was defended by a garrison of crocodiles. Tavernier, vol. ii. p. 72. So were several cities in Pegu. Purchas's Pilgrimage, vol. ii. 1737. Pliny (vi. 20) alludes to the same practice. These reptiles sometimes attain the length of thirty feet in Nubia. Egypt and Mohammed Ali, vol. i. p. 472.

inundations, and being supposed to be a god in one of his transmigrations, is complimented with divine honours [45]. Lizards, frogs, and toads abound in many of the provinces; and turtles are numerous in the rivers and on the sea coasts.

Among the birds of Hindoostan, the eagle, the vulture, and the peacock are the principal. The vulture abounds wherever there are many dead bodies. When there is a scarcity of human flesh, which, owing to the intestine wars and superstitions of the natives, there has seldom been in India, the vulture repairs to the sea-shore, and there patiently watches all day the action of the waves, in the hope that some dead fishes may be thrown up on the sand [46]. When this resource fails it will visit graves and cemeteries, and, like the hyæna, disinter and devour the putrid corpse. It is sometimes joined on the field by wild dogs and jackalls, which have been observed feeding with it on the same carcass [47]. The finest hawks, for the amusement of falconry, are brought from Cashmere. Owls, cockatoos, parrots, bee-eaters, and other birds found between the tropics, are common. Vast flights of aquatic birds hover over the Sunderbunds, and in the moist tracts about Surat, among which the mute swan, the jabiree, or snail-eater, the argali, or adjutant (*ardea argala*), the white-headed ibis [48], and the violet heron are the most remarkable. The peacock is found in a state of nature

[45] Pennant's View of Hindoostan, vol. ii. p. 207.

[46] Ibid. p. 36.

[47] This occurred after the attack of the nabob's camp, before the battle of Plassey. Pennant, vol. ii. p. 36. Speaking of the same bird, he adds, " I have been told that whenever an animal falls down dead, one or more vultures (unseen before) instantly appear: so quick is their scent of death." p. 37.

[48] The pink-coloured feathers of the tail of this bird are used by the ladies of Calcutta as part of their head-dress. Pennant, vol. ii. p. 158.

in no country but India [49], where it ranks as the first of birds, and with its glorious colours enlivens the solitude of the woods. The huge bats of India, and the vampire, or flying cat, may come in here in the rear of the birds, between which and the terrestrial animals they in some measure form the connecting link. The most extraordinary of Indian fishes is that small species which appears after the rainy season in places previously dry. It is caught by the natives on the island of Bombay, on the tenth day after the first rains, and is a common dish at their tables. Naturalists have suggested many modes of accounting for this phenomenon; some imagine the spawn may have been brought inland by the water-fowl; others that it is caught up by the whirlwinds, which rage with tremendous force at the commencement of the rainy season, and afterwards showered down upon the land in the torrents which then escape from the clouds; others that these fishes were originally frogs, but transformed by some wondrous process of nature, as the chrysalis is transformed into the butterfly [50]. The mango-fish, of a brilliant orange colour, like a ripe mango, swims up the Ganges, as far as Calcutta,

[49] Bishop Heber observes that he saw a flock of wild peacocks at Bareilly, and tame ones in all the villages on the banks of the Jumna and in the neighbourhood of Bhurtpoor, vol. ii. p. 141, 365. These birds were so rare in Greece that a male and female were valued at Athens at a thousand drachmæ, or £32. 5*s*. 10*d*. sterling. The island of Samos, which was sacred to Juno, was celebrated for its peacocks. Aulus Gellius, lib. vii. c. 16.

[50] Pennant's View of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 102, 103; Seba, vol. i. p. 125; and Merian's Surinam, p. 71. According to the rational conjecture of Buchanan, the fish's eggs, which are exceedingly tenacious of life, remain all the year in the dry mud, and are quickened on the return of the rains. Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 66; vol. iii. p. 342. This happens also in the small lakes of Lower Egypt, near the Pyramids. Egypt and Mohammed Ali, vol. i. p. 228.

in the month of June, spawns and returns to the sea in six weeks. This is the most delicious of Indian fish. Swarms of other fish are found in the Ganges[51]; such as the carp, the chub, the *anjana*, and the *ophidium aculeatum*. On the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar fish is so abundant that pigs, dogs, and horses are fed upon it[52]. The fierce heat of the torrid zone calls into life innumerable insects, unknown in more northern regions; and crowds of locusts, scorpions, black and white ants, and butterflies, swarm over the face of the country. Silkworms are found in Bengal, and towards the north of Poonah, in the Dekkan[53].

[51] Pliny had heard of eels three hundred feet long being found in this river! Duperron supposes that he must have meant alligators, which would mend the matter but little, as alligators are no more three hundred feet long than eels. Tieffenthaler, tom. ii. p. 269.

[52] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 43. In this general outline of the country, and in the ensuing more minute description of the provinces, reference was constantly made to Mr. Arrowsmith's Map of India, which, though not certainly without errors, is a work of great value to the geographer.

[53] See Dr. Roxburgh's paper on the silkworms of Bengal, in the seventh volume of the Transactions of the Linnæan Society; and Colonel Sykes' account of the Kolisurra silkworms in the Dekkan, Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 541, &c.

CHAPTER II.

PROVINCES OF INDIA.

HAVING now given a comprehensive description of the general aspect of Hindoostan, its rivers, mountains, plants, and animals, we shall next proceed to enumerate and describe separately the several provinces which compose the empire.—The first of these, both in extent and importance, is Bengal[1]. This province, which has frequently formed a separate kingdom, is strongly protected by nature on all sides from foreign invasion; on the north, by a belt of impenetrable thickets[2] and a chain of low mountains; by vast rivers and another mountainous ridge on the east; on the south, by an inaccessible shore and impenetrable woods; and on the west, by a sterile and almost desert frontier. Bengal is divided by the Ganges into two nearly equal parts, of which that on the eastern side of the river is least accessible to an enemy[3]. With the exception of a few gentle hills on the north, the whole province may be termed one vast plain, like the country between the Tigris and the Euphrates, or the level tract of land which separates the Volga from the Jaik. In all the level ground of the southern districts, which is overflowed in the

[1] The ancient name of this province was *Banga*.

[2] "Along the whole northern frontier, from Assam, westward, there runs a belt of low land, from ten to twenty miles in breadth, covered with the most exuberant vegetation, particularly a rank weed, named in Bengal the *augeah*-grass, which sometimes grows to the height of thirty feet, and thick as a man's wrist, and mixed with these are tall forest trees." Hamilton, vol. i. p. 2.

[3] Hamilton's Description, vol. i. p. 2.

rainy season, rice is cultivated, and thrives luxuriantly, but as we ascend the Ganges it gradually gives place to wheat and barley. Besides these kinds of grain the province produces cotton, indigo, tobacco, opium, and the mulberry tree. Its forests abound with wild boars, elephants, buffaloes, antelopes [4], and deer, and its rivers, but more especially the Ganges, with fish; of which the principal are the delicious mango, already alluded to in our general description, and the mullet, which, as it swims against the stream with its head above water, is shot like a bird [5].

The most remarkable portion of Bengal is the dismal region of the Sunderbunds [6], or that thickly-wooded swampy belt which forms the southern border of the delta of the Ganges, and is itself bounded by the ocean. This whole region is a mere labyrinth of creeks and rivers, and appears in the course of ages to have been traversed in every direction by the principal branches of the Ganges, which seem, in fact, to have formed this delta by their deposits, there being no appearance of virgin earth from the Tipperah hills on the east, to the district of Burdwan on the west [7]. Forests of vast extent here cover the whole soil, and encroach upon the rivers; the masts of vessels sailing up or down the streams being frequently entangled in the branches of the trees. These wide extended woods are inhabited only by a few fanatical fakeers.

[4] In the Institutes of Menu, the country in which it is lawful for a follower of the Brahminical religion to live is determined by certain natural boundaries: the legislator then proceeds, "that land on which the black antelope (*antilope cervicapra*) naturally grazes is held fit for the performance of sacrifices." Menu, ii. 23. Parallel passages occur in several other ancient Hindoo law-codes.

[5] Hamilton's Description, vol. i. p. 28.

[6] This word is derived from *sundarí-vana*, "a forest of sundari trees." Hamilton, vol. i. p. 123. The *sundarî* is a small timber tree (*herritiera minor*).

[7] Hamilton, vol. i. p. 123.

On all sides a gloomy silence prevails, occasionally broken by the cooing of the dove, the bray of the deer, the crowing of the cock, the screaming of the parroquets, and the leaping and springing of monkeys from tree to tree. Alligators of enormous size may almost every where be seen basking on the sunny banks of the rivers, or plunging into the streams; while huge tigers prowl about the margin of the water, and spring suddenly upon the miserable wood-cutter[8] or salt-maker, or swim out into the rivers to attack the boats' crews lying at anchor. The fakeers themselves, who pretend to possess charms sufficiently powerful to repel these indiscriminating persecutors, and live in miserable huts by the river-side, where they receive the prayers and the charity of the passers-by, become the prey of the tigers, and disappear one after the other. The cultivation of these salt marshy lands is supposed to be impracticable; and, even were it otherwise, it might not perhaps be judicious to clear away the forests, which, besides furnishing the capital with an inexhaustible supply of wood for fuel, boat-building, and other purposes, present a strong natural barrier against maritime invasion along the whole southern frontier of the province.

The most fertile and best cultivated portion of Bengal is the district of Burdwan, which, environed by the jungles of Midnapoor, Pacheta, and Birbhoom, appears like a garden in the midst of a wilderness.

[8] "Many of the wood-cutters are Hindoos, who have assigned to various gods and goddesses particular portions of the Sunderbunds. These Hindoo labourers raise elevations of earth, three or four inches high and about three feet square, upon which they place balls of earth, and having painted them red, perform worship before them, offering rice, flowers, fruit, and the waters of the Ganges. The head boatman then fasts and goes to sleep; during which last operation a god or goddess informs him in a dream where wood may be cut without dread of tigers." Hamilton's Description of Hindostan, vol. i. p. 125.

It was ceded, with other districts, to the British government in 1760, and has gone on from that period improving in cultivation and riches. It produces sugar, cotton, indigo, pawn, tobacco, and mulberry trees; and three great roads convey its productions to Hooghly, Culna, and Cutwa, the district not having the advantage of internal navigation [9].

The seasons of Bengal are the cold, the hot, and the rainy. In the month of April, or earlier in some parts, storms, accompanied by thunder, lightning, and rain, are frequent, and generally, towards the close of the day, set in from the north-west. These continue to mitigate the heat, until the commencement of the rains in June. When the monsoon breaks up early in September the weather grows intolerably hot, and the inhabitants, especially the Europeans, become very sickly. In the eastern and middle districts thunder-storms and sometimes milder showers refresh the atmosphere and mitigate the heat. Fogs are frequent in winter, and there falls an abundant penetrating dew. Frost and extreme cold are experienced in the mountainous parts, and even in the plain ice is obtained simply by assisting evaporation in porous vessels [10].

On the south of Bengal, proceeding along the sea-coast, lies the province of Orissa; bounded on the east by the sea, and on the west by the province of Gundwana; whilst on the south, an imaginary line, drawn due west from the northern point of the Chilka lake, divides it from the northern Circars [11]: this pro-

[9] Hamilton's Description, vol. i. p. 153.

[10] Ibid. p. 16, 18.

[11] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 147. Formerly, however, Orissa extended much farther to the south, and comprehended the greater part of the northern Circars. In his map, drawn and coloured by Arrowsmith, Hamilton agrees with the French geographer in making Orissa extend only as far as the Chilka lake; but he asserts in the text that the river Godavery is the real southern boundary of Orissa, vol. ii. p. 31.

bably was the country of the ancient Gangaridæ (see Pliny, N. H. vi. 20). The interior of the province, consisting of rugged hills, pathless deserts and jungles, deep water-courses, and impenetrable forests, pervaded by a pestilential atmosphere, remains in a very savage state, and forms a strong natural barrier to the maritime districts. Even the plain country, though by nature exceedingly fertile, is neither well cultivated nor thickly peopled. Rice and salt are the principal articles of produce; the former is sufficiently abundant to allow of exportation. The sea-coast is frequently visited by tremendous hurricanes, and the low lands are liable to sudden and destructive inundations. Wild beasts multiply with such astonishing rapidity in the jungles and upland forests of this province, that they are daily gaining ground upon the inhabitants, and extending their empire; even the low lands are occasionally infested by jackalls, tigers, and other noxious and rapacious animals.

In the district of Cuttac in this province stands the celebrated temple of Jagannât'h[12]. It is situated on a low sandy plain, about one mile and a half from the sea-shore, and is chiefly remarkable for the superstitious rites of which it is the scene, being in itself a mere mass of shapeless and decayed granite, now much damaged by a late earthquake. It is said, however, to contain images of Krishna and of his brother and sister, which the Hindoos believe to be four thousand years old[13]. The precincts of this temple for ten miles round are accounted so holy,

[12] Properly Jagannât'ha, i. e. "The Lord of the Universe," which is in Sanscrit one of the names of Vishnu or Krishna. The temple is called by the title of the deity to which it is sacred. The name is sometimes corruptedly written Juggernauth.

[13] Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 16, 18; Bernier's Travels, Osborn's Collection, folio, p. 198; Travels of W. Bruton, Osborn's Collection, vol. ii. p. 277; Anquetil Duperron, Zendavesta, Disc. Prélim. tom. i. p. 81; Sonnerat, Voy. aux Indes Orien-

that whoever dies within them is secure of heaven. Hence the self-sacrifices perpetrated during the thirteen religious festivals celebrated at this temple, and the desire of old persons to end their days in its vicinity. The whole region seems to be consecrated to death. The numerous roads leading to the temple from various portions of the empire are strewed with human bones; and the bodies crushed by the *rat'h*, on grand festivals, are left on the ground, festering in the burning sun. At the same time, as if to shew the affinity between gloomy superstition and voluptuousness, the car of this odious god is painted with figures indescribably obscene, and the dances of the attending priests are equally remarkable for their disgusting indecency[14].

Following the coast line towards Cape Comorin, the next province which presents itself is that of the Northern Circars, which, stretching along the shore for four hundred and seventy miles, from Malond on the Chilka lake, to Mootapilly at the mouth of the river Gundegama, includes a portion of the ancient province of Orissa. The Northern Circars are divided from Gundwana by a chain of lofty and nearly impassable mountains; from the province of Hyderabad, on the west, by a range of small detached hills; and on the south, from Ongole, and the Carnatic below the Ghauts, by the small river Gundegama.

In the northern portion of this province the monsoon rains generally commence about the middle of June, with gentle showers and a westerly wind, and continue to the end of August, when the small grain harvest is concluded. From this time until the end

tales, tom. i. p. 218; Mansbach, in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 253, &c.

[14] Hamilton's Description, vol. ii. p. 50, 58; Ward's View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 163; Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 19—39.

of October, there is heavy and continued rain, and the monsoon, which is succeeded by a north-easterly wind, closes with violence in the beginning of November. The season which now commences is the pleasantest period of the year, and during its continuance the second and third harvests are gathered in. The hot season commences about the close of the vernal equinox; but, on account of the hilly nature of the country, and the constant succession of cool refreshing breezes from the sea, the temperature of the atmosphere is seldom very high.

To the south of the Godavery the seasons assume a different aspect. During the first two months preceding the rains the heat is moderated by the sea-breezes, and strong gales from the south; but the latter blowing over a succession of salt, stagnant, marshy pools on the coast, exert a baneful influence upon animal and vegetable life. These are succeeded by a burning wind from the west, which prevails throughout the month immediately preceding the rains, and during its continuance the heat, especially near the mouth of the Krishna, becomes nearly intolerable[15]. The soil of this province is sandy upon the coast, but improves as you advance into the interior. It is watered by numerous small rivers; is exceedingly fertile in grain, and its mountain forests abound in teak trees of the largest growth. Owing to the prevalence of the sea breezes, fruits, roots, and esculent vegetables are scarce. The neighbouring sea, with its numerous inlets, abounds with every variety of Indian fish[16].

The Carnatic, which extends from the river Gun-

[15] Neither wood nor glass is capable of bearing this heat for any length of time; the latter, such as shades and globe lanterns, crack and fly to pieces; the former warps and shrinks so, that the nails fall out of the doors and tables. Hamilton's Description, vol. ii. p. 61.

[16] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 60—94.

degama to Cape Comorin[17], comprehends the former dominions and dependencies of the Nabob of Arcot, and is five hundred and sixty miles in length by about seventy-five in breadth. This province is divided into the Northern, the Central, and the Southern Carnatic.

The first of these divisions extends from the southern limit of the Guntoor Circar to the river Panaur, and includes a portion of the district of Nellore[18], Ongole, and other smaller districts; the second extends from the Panaur to the Coleroon, and contains the remainder of Nellore, Serdamilly, Chandghery, Chingleput, Vellore, Conjee, Wandiwash, Gingee, Palamcotta, Volconda, and a portion of Trichinopoly; the third extends from the Coleroon to Cape Comorin, and comprehends the remainder of Trichinopoly, the Poligar's territory, the districts of Marawa, Madura, and Tinnevelly, and the kingdom of Tanjore.

The principal rivers of the Carnatic are the Panaur, the Palaur, the Voygaroo, and the Cavery. These rivers have their sources in the table-land above the Ghauts, which, by their vast height and great extent, divide the Carnatic into two natural divisions, the one above, and the other below the Ghauts, and by impeding and changing the course of the winds, divide the seasons. The soil of the province along the coast is, for the most part, light and sandy. In the interior the basis of the soil is a decomposition of

[17] From the sixteenth to the eighth degree of north latitude. Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 399.

[18] Near the town of this name a peasant discovered, in 1787, while ploughing, the remains of a small Hindoo temple, under which a little pot was found containing Roman coins and medals of the second century. Some were sold as old gold and melted; but about thirty were preserved. Of these many were fresh and beautiful; others, which had probably been worn as ornaments, were perforated and defaced. They were mostly Trajans, Adrians, and Faustinas, and all of the purest gold. —Orme; Davidson and Hamilton.

sienite impregnated with common salt, which in dry weather clothes the surface of the fields with a saline efflorescence. The climate of the Carnatic is one of the hottest in India [19]; but in May, June, and July, the air is cooled and the earth refreshed by frequent showers, or by torrents of rain, which sometimes deluge the country. At other times vegetation is scorched, shrunk up, or buried beneath the clouds of fine dust which are driven along like mist by burning winds from the interior.

The Carnatic is remarkable neither for its mines nor for its agricultural productions. No stately forests bestow grandeur upon its mountains, and its plains are neither pleasant nor fertile. Its chief produce is dhourra, betel, tobacco, the dwarf cotton tree, and raghi (Cynosurus Corocanus), a small grain on which the poorer natives chiefly subsist. The rice harvest is poor and scanty, and the sugar-cane does not thrive [20]. The Coromandel [21] coast is low and sterile, and the sea, extremely shallow, is here rendered dangerous by a perpetual current and a tremendous surf. The only signs of vegetation discoverable from the sea are thickets of low bushes and wild nopal trees [22]. In the immediate vicinity of Madras the soil

[19] The temperature during the summer months is so high, that at Madras the air would be insufferable were it not cooled when passing into the houses by wet mats of the fragrant cusa grass suspended at the doors and windows.

[20] Hamilton's Description of Hindostan, vol. ii. p. 400.

[21] Properly *Chola Mandala.* "In Sanscrit the primitive meaning of the latter word is *orbit* or *circle*, and thence a region or tract of country; and probably it received its name from the Chola dynasty, the ancient sovereigns of Tanjore." Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 405. Wilson's Catalogue of the Mackenzie Collection, vol. i. p. 180, &c.

[22] The nopal is the prickly pear upon which the cochineal insect feeds. This plant keeps fresh, and even continues to vegetate long after it is gathered, and it also makes an excellent pickle for sea voyages. Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 409.

produces, when well cultivated and sufficiently watered by the periodical rains, a good crop of rice, and a pleasing verdure is maintained by the indefatigable industry of the natives. Beyond this small circle the country, which is nearly as flat as Bengal, is nothing but one vast, naked, brown dusty plain, interspersed with few villages or signs of life or vegetation [23]. The districts of Ongole and Nellore, the most northern portion of the Carnatic, are said to contain several copper mines; but hitherto they have not been successfully worked.

The mountainous districts of the Carnatic contain the ruins of a prodigious number of fortresses and pagodas upon which are found numerous inscriptions in the Tamul character [24].

In the district of Arcot, to the south of Nellore, stands the celebrated temple of Tripetty [25], in a secluded hollow surrounded by mountains. The divinity worshipped here under the name of Vencata Rama, or Tripati, is an incarnation of Vishnu; and by the Hindoos his shrine is considered too holy even to be looked upon by a Christian or Mohammedan. To purchase the inviolability of this structure the Brahminical priesthood pay annually to the Government a sum amounting to thirty thousand pounds sterling [26].

[23] Yet the author of the Ayeen Akbery speaks of the country within the sandy belt, which runs along the coast, as being fertile and covered with grain, ripening in rapid succession throughout the year. And Paulinus describes the coast as resembling "un théatre de verdure," tom. i. p. 2.

[24] Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. iii. p. 121.

[25] "Les pélerins y présentent leurs offrandes, et se font couper les cheveux dont ils font un sacrifice au dieu Vishnou. Cette divinité, dans le huitième de ses apparitions, représente le dieu Krichna-Gopala, c'est-à-dire, le dieu Berger noir et jeune." Voyage aux Indes Orientales, par Paulin de St. Barthélemy, tom. i. p. 46.

[26] Dr. Francis Buchanan; Major Rennell's Memoir; and Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 431.

At Trivicary, a village in the district of Southern Arcot, and once a place of great importance, there is a magnificent pagoda, over the gate of which rises a stupendous stone tower, eight stories high. The tank from which this temple is supplied with water covers several acres of ground. In the neighbourhood are found the most extraordinary petrifactions, among which is a tree eight feet in diameter and sixty feet in length, as hard as flint. On the sea-coast of the same district are the celebrated pagodas of Chillimbaram, enclosed by a high wall of blue stone. The principal of these favourite places of pilgrimage is constructed on the same plan as the temple of Jagannât'h, and although of smaller dimensions is an exquisite specimen of Hindoo architecture. Among the curiosities of this temple is a chain of granite five hundred and forty-eight feet in length, beautifully wrought and polished, forming four festoons, and extending from the four angles of the cupola to the nave. Each link of this chain is upwards of three feet in length, and the whole is supported by four huge stones projecting in the form of wedges from the walls[27].

This portion of the peninsula is renowned for its holy edifices and extensive ruins. On the sea-coast, thirty-five miles south of Madras, is Mahamalaipur or Mahabalipuram, usually called by the English the Seven Pagodas, a collection of extraordinary ruins, among which are found a temple cut out of the solid rock, and many sculptured idols, both in basso and alto relievo. On another part of the hill is a colossal figure of Vishnu, reposing on the coils of a huge serpent. According to the legendary tales of the Brahmins at Mahamalaipur these ruins mark the site of a great city, now partly covered by the sea.

[27] Legoux de Flaix, tom. i. p. 118.

But Dr. Babington, who has given a description of the place in the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, doubts whether that report is correct, and is inclined to believe that the sequestered and picturesque situation of the rocks and caves induced certain Brahmins to obtain royal grants for founding a sanctuary here, and that they from time to time employed stone-masons to ornament the rocks with the excavations and sculptures which are now to be seen here [28].

Next to Burdwan in Bengal, the district of Tanjore, in this province, is the most highly cultivated and productive territory in India; the waters of the Cavery, separated from those of the Coleroon by enormous mounds, being distributed by canals over the whole country. Tanjore, the capital of the district, and anciently a celebrated seat of Hindoo learning, contains the most beautiful pyramidical temple in Hindoostan, in which is preserved the figure of a bull in black granite, finely sculptured [29]. Near Combooconam, twenty-three miles north-east of Tanjore, and in the midst of a richly cultivated country, there is a sacred pond, which once in twelve years has the power of washing away the moral stains of those who bathe in it, and is consequently piously resorted to by

[28] Hamilton remarks that it is not known why the place has been thus named, as there are not seven pagodoes, vol. ii. p. 450. Bishop Heber visited these ruins. He observes, that exactly at day-break he "reached the rocky beach below the seven pagodas, and where the surf, according to the Hindoos, rolls and roars over the city of the great Bali. One very old temple of Vishnu stands immediately on the brink and amid the dash of the spray; and there are really some small remains of architecture, among which a tall pillar, supposed by some to be a lingam, is conspicuous, which rises from among the waves." Vol. iii. p. 216—218. On the inscriptions found at Mahamalaipur, see Transact. of the Roy. Asiat. Society, vol. ii. p. 258, &c.

[29] Lord Valentia's Travels.

all descriptions of sinners. To the west of Tanjore lie the mild and fertile district of Trichinopoly, and the island of Seringham, celebrated for its magnificent pagodas[30], and to the south of these are Dindigul and Madura. The small tract of country which is denominated Dindigul is adorned with woods and interspersed with small hillocks; and the climate is one of the finest in Hindoostan, the air being perpetually cooled by passing showers. Madura is warmer, and, containing many jungles and marshes, more unhealthy[31].

In the straits between this part of the continent and Ceylon, lies the little island of Ramisseram, or the Pillar of Ram, renowned in the Hindoo mythology as the scene of the exploits of Rama, one of the incarnations of Vishnu. The great pagoda of this island, a stupendous structure, which for the massiveness of its architecture may be compared with the temples of Egypt or the Cyclopean edifices of Italy, is entered by a gateway one hundred feet high, covered with sculpture to the summit. The door, forty feet in height, is composed of single blocks of stone, arranged perpendicularly and held together by other blocks fixed transversely at the top and bottom. At this pagoda the waters of the Ganges, transported thither by the piety of numerous pilgrims, and having acquired additional virtue and sanctity by being poured over the statue of the Lingam, is sold to the devout at an exorbitant price. The priests of this temple observe or profess perpetual celibacy[32].

The province of Travancore, extending along the western coast of the peninsula from Cape Comorin to the tenth degree of north latitude, is bounded on the south and west by the sea; on the east by a range of

[30] Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. iii. p. 187.
[31] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 470.
[32] Cordiner's Account of Ceylon, vol. ii. p. 1—3.

lofty hills, dividing it from Tinnevelly; and on the north by the territories of the Cochin Rajah. The whole territory is in the highest degree picturesque and beautiful, consisting of hills, valleys, and lofty mountains, watered by numerous streams, and covered with magnificent forests in perpetual verdure. The trees composing these forests produce pepper, cardamoms, cassia, frankincense, and other aromatic gums. Elephants, buffaloes, and tigers of the largest size abound in the woods; where monkeys and apes are also found in immense herds or families [33]. The produce of Travancore consists of rice, which is abundant, and cultivated without the aid of artificial irrigation,—pepper, betel, the cocoa-nut, tobacco, cassia, mace, long nutmegs, and wild saffron. The kokila (Cuculus Indicus) is frequently met with [34].

The small province of Cochin is bounded on the north by Malabar, on the east by the Dindigul district, on the south by Travancore, and on the west by the sea [35]. The northern portion of Cochin consists of a succession of narrow valleys, well watered by small perennial streams, in which rice is cultivated, and yields two crops in the year. The mountains are covered with stately forests, and the plains which skirt the bottoms of the hills are dotted with groves of palms, mangoes, jacks, and plantains, in which the houses of the natives are embosomed. The mountain-forests abound with teak, but of an inferior quality, erambo or iron-wood, black-wood, and jack-wood, which is used only for cabinet-work. The

[33] Paulin de St. Barthélemy, tom. i.; with the remarks of Forster, tom. iii. p. 156—158.

[34] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 309—322.

[35] See on the subject of Cochin, Paulin de St. Barthélemy, tom. i. p. 215—226; Baldæus' Description of the Coast of India, &c. p. 111—136; and Hamilton's New Account of the East Indies.

chief exports from this province are pepper, cardamoms, teak-wood and sandal-wood, cocoa-nuts, coir cordage, cassia, and fish-maws [36].

The province of Malabar extends for about two hundred miles along the coast, from the northern limits of Cochin to the river Chandraghiri, and is a narrow slip of land lying between the western Ghauts and the sea. A great portion of the country is comparatively low [37], but intersected by narrow ravines, covered with forests and jungles, and lavishly watered by innumerable small streams and torrents from the mountains. Towards the month of February the heat begins to be intense, and numerous vapours spread themselves, as at Lima in Peru, like a canopy over the whole face of the country, sometimes ascending as high as the summits of the mountains, and again sinking to the earth, like an ocean in perpetual ebb and flow. This vapoury covering remains thus floating in perturbation till the setting in of the monsoon, when it is precipitated to the earth in rain.

One of the two portions into which this province may be divided consists of small low hills, of which the sides are steep, but formed into terraces and cultivated, the summits level and composed in most instances of native rock. The valleys between these hills are extremely fertile, and support a numerous population. The sandy plain on the sea-coast, which upon an average is about three miles wide, rises in the immediate vicinity of the sea into slightly-elevated

[36] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 302—308.

[37] Paulin de St. Barthélemy informs us that, according to the traditions of the natives, the sea formerly flowed up to the foot of the Ghauts; and that consequently the whole level country of Malabar is an alluvial soil, created by the mountain torrents, tom. i. p. 212. See also the observations of Forster on the formation of Islands and Downs on the Sea-coast, tom. iii. p. 160, 161.

downs, well adapted for the cocoa-nut tree, and a little further inland produces excellent rice. The coast is indented by numerous inlets of the sea, which in many places receive the rapid torrents that rush down from the mountains. On other parts of the shore, the water of these torrents, opposed in their passage by elevated sandy downs, stagnate and fertilize the country, but are not thought detrimental to the salubrity of the air. One of the nameless rivers of this province produces gold-dust. There are few towns or villages in Malabar, except on the sea-coast. The inhabitants prefer residing on their estates, and their neat solitary dwellings, usually erected on rising grounds, are surrounded by walled gardens, and shaded by betel and cocoa-nut trees. On this account the whole country, interspersed with cottages, gardens, and groves, has a pleasing and picturesque appearance. The chief produce of Malabar is black pepper, cocoa-nuts, cardamoms, and teak and sandal-wood. The number of cocoa-nut trees in this province is supposed to amount to three millions, of which many single trees will yield annually five hundred nuts[38].

Still following the coast-line towards the north, we next arrive at the province of Canara, which is commonly divided into North and South Canara, and extends from the river Chandraghiri to Cape Rama, near Goa, in the Concan. This province, one hundred and eighty miles in length, is bounded on the east by the Ghauts, on the south by Malabar, on the west by the sea, and on the north by the province of Bejapoor. Though of a broken and rugged surface, Canara for the most part is well cultivated, and produces considerable quantities of rice, betel-nut,

[38] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 272—301; Buchanan's Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. ii. p. 347. The name of Malabar is derived from Malaya.

black pepper, cardamoms, and plantains. The bullocks of this province, being not much larger than long-legged goats, are too feeble for use; and the produce of the country is therefore transported from place to place on men's heads. In the northern division of Canara is situated the lake of Onore, which is of very considerable extent, and thickly sprinkled with small islands, of which some few are cultivated. The waters of this lake are rather brackish in the dry season, but quite fresh during the rains, and abound with fish, which, when dried, form an important article of commerce.

This province, and the countries bordering upon it, have usually been called the Georgia of Hindoostan, being renowned for beautiful women. Our authorities add, however, that the men are exceedingly jealous, and will scarcely allow their wives or daughters to be seen by strangers: a circumstance which somewhat lessens the value of the testimony of travellers on the subject of their charms[39].

Bejapoor is bounded on the north by the province of Aurungabad, on the east by a portion of the same province and Hyderabad, on the south by the rivers Toombudra and Wurda, and by Canara, and

[39] Canara having been long in the possession of Carnata princes, obtained from them its present corrupt appellation. It is clear from Buchanan's account that there are in this province other modes of transporting goods than that mentioned in the text. "The country looks well; for even the greater part of the sandy height is enclosed, and planted for timber and fuel. Except where the cattle were forced to swim over a very wide river, called Mabuculla, the road was comparatively excellent. This river descends from the Ghauts, and in the rainy season brings down a great body of fresh water; but where the road crosses, it is at this season quite salt. The tide goes up from the sea about three cosses; and canoes, in the rainy season, can ascend six cosses from the mouth. The banks are well planted with cocoa-nut trees, which in Tulava seem confined to such places."

on the west by the sea. It is about three hundred and twenty miles in length, and two hundred in breadth. The western portion of Bejapoor, especially in the neighbourhood of the Ghauts, is extremely rugged and mountainous; but towards the east the country expands into a fine fertile champaign, watered by numerous noble rivers. The banks of the Bheema, a river which flows through this part of the province, are celebrated for a fine breed of horses, which used to supply the best portion of the Mahratta cavalry. That part of Bejapoor which lies between the Ghauts and the sea is denominated the Concan.

The city of Bejapoor[40], anciently the capital of an extensive Musulman kingdom, and renowned for its vast dimensions and magnificence, is situated on an eminence, about twenty-six miles north of the river Krishna. It is now in ruins; but its immense fortress, its stately and splendid mausolea, mosques, and minarets, some of which still remain entire, attest its ancient grandeur.

From the Ghauts to the sea, the country gradually declines, and numerous streams, having their sources in the higher lands, flow over and fertilize it; but there is no considerable river. Formerly the whole coast of the Concan, which is bold and indented with numerous bays and harbours, was greatly infested with pirates, whose principal haunts were Warree, Gheria, and Victoria on the Bauncole river; but the English have now succeeded in clearing the coast and the sea of these miscreants.

In the southern part of the Concan, two hundred and fifty miles south-south-east of Bombay, stands the city of Goa[41], where the Inquisition, introduced

[40] The Viziapoor of our old European travellers. Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 207; Buchanan, vol. iii. p. 104.

[41] The Hindoo name of this city is *Tissouri*. Tieffenthaler, Descrip. de l'Inde, tom. i. p. 364. See, for an account of these

into India as an instrument of conversion, perpetrated in the name of religion the most odious atrocities. The city of Bijanagur, of considerable antiquity, and formerly eight miles in circumference, is situated in the interior of this province. It was once the capital of the kingdom of Narasingha, and is said to have been distinguished for its splendour and magnificence.

The province of Aurungabad, which lies to the north of Bejapoor, is bounded on the west by the sea, on the east by Berar and Hyderabad, and on the north by Berar, Khandeish, and Guzerat. It contains many celebrated cities, and is renowned as having been the original seat of the Mahratta power, and the scene of many memorable events. It was in all probability in the capital of this province that Aurungzebe, while viceroy of the Dekkan, matured those deep-laid schemes which ultimately placed him on the throne of India, and enabled him to achieve an unenviable immortality.

The fortress of Ahmednuggur, beautifully situated

horrors, Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 156—182; and Dellon's Account of the Inquisition at Goa, whose descriptions, as Dr. Buchanan observes, are in general very accurate. When Buchanan visited the place in 1808, he put Dellon's book into the hands of the Chief Inquisitor. "He had never seen it before, and began to read with eagerness. He had not proceeded far before he betrayed evident symptoms of uneasiness. He turned hastily to the middle of the book and then to the end, and then ran over the table of contents at the beginning, as if to ascertain the full extent of the evil. He then composed himself to read, while I continued to write. He then then turned over the pages with rapidity, and when he came to a certain place he exclaimed in a broad Italian accent, 'Mendacium, mendacium.' I requested he would mark those passages which were untrue, and we should discuss them afterwards, for that I had other books on the subject. 'Other books,' said he, and he looked with an inquiring eye on those on the table. He continued reading until it was time to retire to rest, and then begged to take the book with him." Christian Researches, p. 167

among the mountains; and Dowlutabad, a fortress formed of one isolated mass of granite, and of impregnable strength, are among the remarkable places of this province. But the objects which have chiefly attracted the curiosity of Europeans are the cavern-temples of Elora, probably natural caves in the rock, enlarged by art and formed into structures of vast height and dimensions, upon the face of which the principal divinities of the Hindoo Pantheon, with elephants, giants, and the symbols of the Brahminical worship, are sculptured[42]. At present, however, these extensive subterraneous temples, upon which such prodigious expense and labour were once bestowed, are for some cause or another neglected by the natives, who neither maintain priests there, nor visit them in pilgrimage.

To this province belongs the island of Bombay, situated in the eighteenth degree of north latitude. Bombay, once denominated the "Grave of Europeans," but now no longer unhealthy, lies exactly opposite the mouth of the Goper river, and commands a distant view of the lofty mountains of the Dekkan. The harbour is among the most commodious in the world, its admirable anchoring ground being protected by the land from every wind that blows. Though lying within the tropics, the climate of this island is seldom oppressively hot, the alternation of the land and sea breezes keeping up an almost perpetual freshness in the air; but the night-dews are copious, cold, and prejudicial to health. The former insalubrity of Bombay has been attributed to the cocoa-nut woods, which once covered the greater part of the island[43]; but though in tropical climates it be not healthy to

[42] Captain Seeley's Wonders of Elora, &c.; Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 389—425.

[43] Malte-Brun, vol. iii. p. 159.

dwell in groves, whether of cocoa-nut or any other trees, the malaria of Bombay arose from other causes; the chief of which was the peculiar nature of manure used to fertilize the soil, consisting of the small fry of a certain kind of fish, abounding in the neighbouring sea, which was laid in trenches round the roots of the trees. This mass of animal matter, putrifying rapidly, exhaled a mephitic vapour, which was destructive of human life[44].

The dry season continues at Bombay for about eight months; and a tremendous thunder-storm[45], called the "Elephanta," from its force and violence, usually announces the setting in of the rainy season, which is here regarded as the most agreeable portion of the year, and lasts from the end of May to the beginning of September. The innumerable moist exhalations ascending from the earth at the conclusion of the rains deeply taint the air, and render it unwholesome; and the inhabitants migrate at such periods to their upper apartments, where the effects of the malaria are less sensibly felt[46].

On the north of Bombay lies the larger island of Salsette, inhabited by a singularly wild race, who employ themselves in burning charcoal, but are scarcely at all known to Europeans[47]. This island, formerly separated from Bombay by a narrow strait, but now connected with it by a causeway, is about eighteen miles in length, by about thirteen in breadth; and, though at present uncultivated and covered with jungle, possesses a fertile soil, and was at some remote period a place of considerable importance, a fact amply attested by the remains of tanks, terraces, and flights of steps, together with extraordinary

[44] Grose's Voyage to the East Indies, p. 49.
[45] Ibid. p. 93, 54. [46] Ibid. p. 53, 54.
[47] Bishop Heber's Journal, vol. iii. p. 87.

cavern-temples, covered with sculpture, which are found upon the island [48].

The province of Guzerat, three hundred and twenty miles in length, and one hundred and eighty in breadth, is bounded on the south by Aurungabad, on the east by Khandeish and Malwah, on the north by Ajmere, and on the west by Cutch, the ocean, and a part of Mooltan. Guzerat, a large portion of the interior of which is covered with hills and jungle, is watered by noble and important rivers, as the Nerbudda, the Tuptee, and the Sabermatty; and its sea-coast is crowded with small islands, and indented with numerous creeks. A considerable portion of the province is, however, destitute of water, or is only supplied with it by means of very deep wells. The country appears more than usually level at a distant view; but on a nearer approach it is found to be greatly intersected by natural chasms and by the beds of rain-torrents, that sometimes increase to the magnitude of rivers, on the banks of which ferries are established to float the passengers across in rafts or boats. The soil upon the whole is fertile, though little improved.

Among the principal natural productions of Guzerat [49]

[48] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 171.

[49] Forbes, who had spent the better part of his life in this province, thus describes its aspect and harvests:—"In that delightful part of Hindoostan there are no 'antres vast, or deserts idle,' all is fertility and plenty; the soil, generally rich and loamy, produces valuable harvests of batty, juarree, badjeree, and other grain; with cotton shrubs for oil, and plants for dyeing. Many parts yield a double crop, particularly the rice and cotton fields, which are both planted at the commencement of the rainy season in June. The former is sown in furrows, and reaped in about three months. The cotton shrub, which grows to the height of three or four feet, and in verdure resembles the currant bush, requires a longer time to bring its delicate produce to perfection. They are planted between the rows of rice, but do not impede its growth, or prevent its being reaped. Soon after the rice harvest is over, the cotton bushes put forth a beau-

are horses, excellent bullocks, and draught cattle, hemp, indigo, and opium, in the use of which the natives of the northern districts indulge to excess. In all waste lands, more particularly towards the frontiers of Malwah and Ajmere, are found numerous groves of babool trees, from the trunk and branches of which there exudes a species of gum, which among the Bheels and other wild inhabitants of the hills and jungles, forms an important article of food. Thick rows of this tree, planted round farm-yards and villages, serve, with their thorny and almost impervious branches, as an excellent defence against all wild beasts, except the lion, which, according to Hamilton, here abounds in the woods; though Forbes, who long resided in the country, asserts that this terrible animal is no longer known in Guzerat. The villages in the cultivated and fertile districts are populous, and generally surrounded by groves of orange and tamarind trees, overshadowing the wells and tanks. Rows of bamboos sometimes replace those of the babool as a village rampart, and are said to be no less efficient.

The peninsula of Guzerat, two hundred miles in length, by about one hundred and forty in breadth, extends from the 21st to the 23d degree of north latitude. It projects between the gulfs of Cutch and Cambay into the Indian Ocean; and numerous rivers taking rise in its elevated centre, after enriching and beautifying the country, fall on every side into the sea. One of these, the Ajee, is remarkable for the gold-dust which is sometimes found in its bed. The larger

tiful yellow flower, with a crimson eye in each petal; this is succeeded by a green pod filled with a white stringy pulp; the pod turns brown and hard as it ripens, and then separates into two or three divisions containing the cotton. A luxuriant field, exhibiting at the same time the expanding blossom, the bursting capsule, and the snowy flakes of ripe cotton, is one of the most beautiful objects in the agriculture of Hindoostan." Orient. Mem. vol. ii. p. 405, 406.

rivers receive a great number of tributary streams and rivulets, by which the whole peninsula is to an extraordinary degree intersected. Several of these have poetical names, such as the *Roopa Rote*, "Silver Waves;" the *Phooljer*, "Studded with flowers;" and the *Nagne*, "Serpentine;" and while their waters are clear and excellent, their banks occasionally present picturesque scenes of romantic beauty.

The principal cities of Guzerat are Baroche, Baroda, Cambay, Ahmedabad, the ancient, and Surat, the modern capital.

The province of Cutch, one hundred and forty miles in length, by about ninety-five in breadth, is bounded on the east by Guzerat, on the north and west by Ajmere and Mooltan, and on the south by the gulf of Cutch and the Indian Ocean; and consists of two remarkably distinct portions, the one an immense salt morass called the *Runn*, the other an irregular hilly country completely insulated between the Runn and the sea. This latter division is deficient neither in fertility nor verdure, and whenever industry is unrepressed by the tyranny of the government, is sufficiently productive. "Throughout the interior it is studded with hills of considerable elevation, mostly covered with jungle, where the petty chiefs erect their strong holds and dens, and from whence they look down on, protect, or plunder the intervening valleys. The principal towns are Bhooj, Mandavie, Anjar, Tharra, Cuntcote, and Cutarra. There are many mountain streams, but no navigable rivers; and all along the coast of the Runn, the wells and springs are more or less impregnated with common salt, and other saline ingredients[50]." In general, however, there is a deficiency of water, and the productions of Cutch have consequently never been

[50] Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i. p. 585, 586.

equal to the consumption of its inhabitants. Mines of coal and iron have been recently discovered.

The Runn, which forms the second division of Cutch, is a vast salt morass, the total superficies of which may be estimated at eight thousand square miles. Commencing at the extremity of the gulf of Cutch, of which it would appear to have been at one time a continuation, it sweeps round the whole northern frontier of the province, to the vicinity of Lacpat Bander, on the Sankra or eastern branch of the Indus. Like the Bahr[51] Faraouni, or Lake Tritonis, near the Lesser Syrtis, this prodigious fen may be traversed in certain directions, while in others its plashy or tremulous surface, yielding to the slightest pressure, presents insurmountable obstacles to the passage of caravans or armies. Though for the most part barren and uncultivated, the appearance of the Runn is distinguished in the dry season by an extraordinary variety of phenomena. Diminutive lakes of shallow water, long ridges of barren sand, patches of verdant pasturage, fields susceptible of cultivation, and extensive sheets of saline incrustations, which in many places resemble a fresh fall of snow, alternate with each other, and render this morass one of the most striking and extraordinary spots in the world. Here the *serâb*, or "false water of the desert" (*mirage*), exhibits, during the dry season, its most magnificent illusions. The stunted saline shrubs and bushes are magnified to the size of lofty forest trees, waving, separating and uniting again; armies seem to march over the flat; peaceful hamlets, shady groves, castles with embattled towers, rise, disappear and reappear in rapid succession on the salt bed of the morass, deluding or terrifying the way-worn solitary traveller. During the monsoons,

[51] Dr. Shaw's Travels, 4to. p. 126.

or when the wind blows up the gulf, the whole of this immense plain is inundated, and resembles an arm of the sea; and on the retiring of the waters, myriads of dead prawns, mullets, and other fish, are seen strewed over the surface of the mud. On the physical agents engaged in the formation of the Runn opinions are various, some supposing it to be effected by the overflowing of the Loni, while others, with more probability, regard it as the bed of a gulf, which, by some convulsion of nature, has been raised above the level of the ocean. The accumulated deposits of soil brought down perpetually by the rivers will probably at no distant period exclude the waters entirely, the Loni here performing the part which the Nile has so successfully performed in Egypt. On the banks and in the small oases of the Runn, the wild ass exists in untameable fierceness, breeding in the wastes, and issuing forth in droves in the months of November and December, when the brackish and stunted vegetation of the desert is exhausted, to ravage the corn-fields in the plains. Apes, porcupines, and vast flights of large birds constitute, with the wild ass, the sole inhabitants of this dreary and desolate region [52].

At a distance of about fifty miles from where the Loni falls into the Runn of Cutch, about the latitude of 24° 30′ it sends off numerous branches, which pursue a meandering course through a valley, and again form a junction with the river before entering the Runn. The portion of the country under irrigation from these rivers is called Nueyur. It is fertile in wheat, very populous as compared with the neigh-

[52] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 17, 18; Fifteen Years in India, p. 349—352. Lieutenant Burnes's Memoir on the Eastern Branch of the River Indus and the Runn, in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 550—588.

bouring countries, and studded with villages. The district is subject to the Raja of Joodpoor[53].

The district of Parkur, situated under the twenty-fourth degree of north latitude, and near the seventy-first of east longitude, is nearly enclosed on all sides in the Runn. It is now ruled by two Rajpoot chieftains, but its possession has often been a source of contention between the surrounding governments. There is no river or running stream in this district; but water and pastures are abundant, and the inhabitants subsist by tending herds and flocks, with which they wander from one place to another, as their wants can be most readily supplied[54].

Bhooj, the capital of Cutch, is a strong but irregular fortress, surrounded by a wall, flanked with round and square towers, defended by heavy artillery. Within, each house is a fort, standing in a lofty inclosure of stone, terraced, provided with loop-holes, and generally enfilading the streets and approaches. Even the villages are fortified, and though they might not present very formidable obstacles to a regular army and artillery train, are impregnable to the impetuous but undisciplined forces of the natives[55].

The province of Mooltan, which, in making the circuit of the empire, follows next after Cutch, is bounded on the north by Lahore, on the east by the great desert of Ajmere, on the west by the course of the Indus, and on the south by the Indian Ocean. Its greatest length falls little short of six hundred miles, and in breadth it varies from seventy to about one hundred and fifty miles. Within these limits are contained Bahawulpoor, Bhakar, Sinde, Tatta, and

[53] Burnes, in the Journal of Royal Geographical Society, vol. iv. p. 102—106.

[54] See Lieutenant Burnes, in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. iv. p. 92—102.

[55] Hamilton, vol. i. p. 585—595.

Chalchkaun. The soil in general throughout Mooltan is arid, sandy, and barren, strongly impregnated with saline particles, and producing nothing beyond a few stunted bushes, sufficiently hardy to withstand the influence of the soil. The heat is excessive, and seldom mitigated by refreshing showers or breezes, as it does not rain above three or four times in the year. But in the vicinity of the villages, which are said to be numerous[56], wells and artificial irrigation maintain a certain degree of fertility, and clothe the fields with cotton, wheat, and other grain. The camel[57], which nature has bestowed on desert regions

[56] Tieffenthaler, tom. i. p. 115—120; Hamilton, vol. i. p. 556.

[57] Volney has described, with his usual felicity, the structure and uses of the camel, without whose aid many parts of the earth would be uninhabitable:—"No creature seems so peculiarly fitted to the climate in which it exists; we cannot doubt but the nature of the one has been adapted to that of the other by some *disposing intelligence*. Designing the camel to dwell in a country where he can find little nourishment, Nature has been sparing of her materials in the whole of his formation. She has not bestowed on him the plump fleshiness of the ox, horse, or elephant; but limiting herself to what is strictly necessary, she has given him a small head without ears, at the end of a long neck without flesh. She has taken from his legs and thighs every muscle not immediately requisite for motion, and in short has bestowed on his withered body only the vessels and tendons necessary to connect its frame together. She has furnished him with a strong jaw, that he may grind the hardest aliments; but, lest he should consume too much, she has contracted his stomach, and obliged him to chew the cud. She has lined his foot with a lump of flesh, which sliding in the mud, and being no way adapted to climbing, fits him only for a dry level and sandy soil, like that of Arabia: she has evidently designed him likewise to slavery, by refusing him every sort of defence against his enemies. Destitute of the horns of the bull, the hoof of the horse, the tusk of the elephant, and the swiftness of the stag, how can the camel resist or avoid the attacks of the lion, the tiger, or even of the wolf? To preserve the species, therefore, Nature has concealed him in the depth of the vast deserts, where the want of vegetables can attract no game, and whence the want of game repels

in lieu of fertility, to be the companion and friend of man, whose life it sustains, abounds in Mooltan, which likewise possesses an excellent breed of horses, and a species of long-tailed sheep. The northern portion of the province bordering upon the Panjâb, and within reach of the periodical inundations, is blessed with a high degree of fertility. The principality of Bahawulpoor, which, for a certain distance, includes both banks of the Indus, the Jhylum, and the Chenâb, is in many parts rich, fertile, and highly cultivated; in others covered with low groves of tamarisk trees, which abound with wild boars, hog, deer, wild geese, partridges, and floricans. The Doâb Bhakar, like the western frontier of Egypt, has for many centuries been gradually deteriorating by the encroachment of the desert, by which it must ere long be swallowed up, unless the progress of desolation be timely checked by man. The principality of Sinde, including Tatta, is by far the most important division of Mooltan. It at present includes both banks of the Indus, to the east of which the whole country, excepting two or three low hills, is as level as the sea. The district of Chandookee, around which the waters of the Indus

every voracious animal. Tyranny must have expelled man from the habitable parts of the earth, before the camel could have lost his liberty. Become domestic, he has rendered habitable the most barren soil the world contains. He alone supplies all his master's wants. The milk of the camel nourishes the family of the Arab, under the varied forms of curds, cheese, and butter; and they often feed upon his flesh. Slippers and harness are made of his skin, and tents and clothing of his hair. Heavy burdens are transported by his means; and when the earth denies forage to the horse, so valuable to the Bedouin, the she camel supplies that deficiency by her milk, at no other cost, for so many advantages, than a few stalks of brambles or wormwood, and pounded date kernels. So great is the importance of the camel to the desert, that were it deprived of that useful animal, it must infallibly lose every inhabitant." Vol. i. p. 388—390.

flow in two great branches, is exceedingly rich and highly cultivated, and, notwithstanding the despotism of the government, yields a considerable revenue. The climate of Sinde, like that of most dry and barren countries, is pure and healthy, and the heats of summer are mitigated by cooling breezes from the west. In the Delta of the Indus, however, the climate is sultry and trying to the human constitution, the thermometer ranging as high as 90° in March. The most remarkable towns in Sinde are Tatta, Hyderabad, Sehwun, and Bukkur. The principal sea-port is Curachee. Chalkhaun, the least known division of Mooltan, was, until very recently, supposed to be a mere sandy desert; but our conquests in Guzerat have at length enabled us to dissipate this opinion; for though aridity be the general characteristic of the soil, there are numerous cultivated spots, upon which many hardy and warlike tribes subsist in savage independence.

The city of Mooltan, which is supposed to be the Malli of Alexander's historians, stands in latitude thirty degrees north, four miles from the left banks of the Chenâb. It is enclosed by a fine wall forty or fifty feet in height, and strengthened at regular distances with towers. It has also a citadel erected on an eminence, and several remarkable tombs. From its vicinity, the mountains of Afghânistan, distant between seventy and eighty miles, are sometimes visible. Mooltan is celebrated for its silks and carpets, though the latter are inferior to those of Persia; and the surrounding country, cultivated like a garden, and sprinkled with groves of *neem*, date, and *peepul* trees, presents a rich and highly varied landscape.

The province of Lahore is bounded on the south by Mooltan, Ajmere, and Delhi; on the east by the northern mountains of Hindoostan; on the north by Cashmere; and on the west by the waters of the

Indus, which divide it from Afghânistan. Lahore consists of two nearly equal portions, extremely dissimilar in their nature: the Kohistan, or mountainous tract, which occupies the whole of the north-eastern division of the province; and the Panjâb[58], or great plain of the Five Rivers, which extends from the foot of the Himâlaya to the Indus. The climate is liable to great vicissitudes; the heat of summer, more particularly in the hollows and undulating sandy plains of the Panjâb, being almost equal in intensity to what is experienced on the shores of the Persian Gulf[59], where the whole atmosphere glows like a

[58] Malte-Brun, following I know not what authorities, has erroneously applied the name of the Panjâb to the whole province of Lahore. Précis de Géographie Universelle, tom. iv. p. 46.

[59] Bernier, when accompanying the Court of Aurungzebe into Cashmere, experienced the full effects of a Panjâb summer:—"As their motions were slow, they were overtaken in those burning hollows, which condensed and reflected back the rays of the sun like a vast burning-glass, by the heats of summer, which are there little less intense than on the shores of the Persian Gulf. No sooner had the sun appeared above the horizon than the heat became insupportable. Not a cloud stained the firmament, not a breath of air stood upon the earth. Every herb was scorched to cinders; and throughout the wide horizon nothing appeared but an interminable plain of dust below, and above a brazen or coppery sky, glowing like the mouth of a furnace. The horses, languid and worn out, could scarcely drag their limbs along; the very Hindoos themselves, who seemed designed to revel in sunshine, began to droop, and our traveller, who had braved the climate of Egypt, and the Arabian deserts, writing from the camp, on the tenth day of their march from Lahore, exclaims—'My whole face, hands, and feet are flayed, and my whole body is covered with small red pustules, which prick like needles. Yesterday one of our horsemen, who happened to have no tent, was found dead at the foot of a tree, which he had grasped in his last agonies. I doubt whether I shall be able to hold out till night. All my hopes rest on a little curds which I steep in water, and a little sugar, with four or five lemons. The very ink is dried up at the point of my pen, and the pen itself drops from my hand—adieu.'" Lives of celebrated Travellers.

furnace; while the northern division experiences in winter a degree of cold little inferior to that of the central countries of Europe. In these districts the landscape also has an European aspect, for the margins of the brooks and torrents are fringed with willows, while dark woods of pine trees hang over the beetling cliffs, and cover the solitary recesses of the mountains. The natives, though ignorant of the method of extracting turpentine and tar from the pine, employ slips of its resinous wood as lamps. Fruit and vegetables are rare, the climate being too hot for the productions of Persia, and yet too cold to bring those of India to maturity. Large beds of fossil salt are found in many districts, and the country is supposed to abound in rich mines. The cultivated portion of the northern division of Lahore consists, as in the coffee mountains of Yemen, of small fiats, which, commencing at the summit of the hills, project at intervals one below another, like a range of semi-circular stairs. These fertile terraces are perpetually enriched by the periodical rains, which wash down the lighter and finer particles of soil from the summit of the mountains, and the accumulating mass is preserved from sliding down the steep by vast buttresses of loose stones. In the narrow valleys which separate the hills, rice is cultivated, but not in great quantities.

The principality of Jessulmere, one of the Rajpoot states, is comprised between 25—28° north latitude, and 69—72° east longitude. It occupies a space of about twenty thousand square miles. It is barren and unproductive, with little arable land, and better suited for pasture than agriculture; but neither herds nor flocks are abundant, Jessulmere has no rivers, and the periodical rains are scanty and uncertain. The city of Jessulmere is handsome, and has about

twenty thousand inhabitants; the country is thinly peopled, and the revenues are inconsiderable.

Joodpoor, or Marwar, is the most extensive of the Rajpoot principalities, and one of the largest dominions now ruled by any native prince in India. The territory is situated between 70° and 75° E. long. and 24° and 28° N. lat., occupying about seventy thousand square miles. The country is rich in valuable productions of the mineral and vegetable kingdom, and well peopled. The bulk of the population consists of Rajpoots; next to them in number are the Ghats, a tawny and powerful race of men, originally from Bicaneer and the countries westward of Delhi. The country is intersected by torrents, which are dry in the fair season, but run with violence in the rains. Great quantities of wheat are exported to Ajmere, Bicaneer, &c. The present Raja of Joodpoor is Man Singh, who can trace the history of his ancestors back to the early part of the twelfth century: his revenues are considerable. The city of Joodpoor, the capital, is estimated at about fifty thousand inhabitants[60].

By far the most productive portion of Lahore is the Panjâb, or "region of the five rivers," though even of this division the riches and fertility have been greatly exaggerated. Excepting in the vicinity of the great rivers the soil is sandy, and in a great degree destitute of the nourishing principle. East of the Jhylum, or Hydaspes, the country, a flat or wavy plain, is chiefly appropriated to pasturage, and supports numerous herds of oxen and buffaloes; while on the plain, lying to the west, between the Jhylum and the Indus, immense droves of horses are pastured. There are few trees. Amritsir, the holy city of the

[60] Burnes, in the Journal of the Royal Geogr. Soc. vol. iv. p. 105—129.

Sikhs, is situated between the rivers Setlej and Ravee. Lahore, the capital, stands on the southern bank of the Ravee, or Hydraotes, which is here about three hundred yards broad. The great road, shaded by a double row of plantain trees, leading from Delhi to Persia and Samarkand, passes through Lahore, which, though fallen from its ancient splendour, still contains many spacious buildings and magnificent gardens. The ancient palace of the Mogul emperors, constructed of brick and faced with red granite, is one of the most superb edifices in the world. Viewed from the opposite bank of the river, with its magnificent façade, surrounded by parterres of all the rich and varied flowers of India, which here flourish in eternal spring, it rivals the hanging gardens of Babylon or the fairy creations of the Arabian Nights. The interior of this vast structure is adorned with beautiful red granite, porphyry, lapis lazuli, and gold. Of all its numerous apartments, however, the most admired is the hall of the throne, the roof and walls of which are covered with mirrors of rock crystal, while along the gallery, which surrounds it, there runs a trellis-work of massive gold, with bunches of artificial fruit composed of pearls and jewels. In another chamber there is a bath of oriental agate in the form of a boat, and encircled with bands of gold. This bath, which will contain eight hogsheads, was used in the time of the Mogul sovereigns to be filled with rose-water[61]. About two miles north of Lahore stands the celebrated mausoleum of Jehanghir, which, though inferior to the *Taj Mahal* at Agra, is nevertheless a structure of striking magnificence.

The province of Cashmere, comprehended between the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth degrees of north latitude, is surrounded by two ranges of the Indian

[61] Legoux de Flaix, Essais, tom. i. p. 147.

Caucasus, which, after diverging considerably, and embracing the whole extent of the valley, again unite and become one. It is bounded on the north by Little Tibet, on the east by Ladhak, on the south by Lahore, and on the west by Pukhely; and, including the mountains, is about one hundred and ten miles in length by about sixty in breadth. The traditions of the Hindoos respecting the formation of this beautiful valley greatly resemble those which prevailed among the Greeks about that of Thessaly; both being said to have been originally a lake enclosed by lofty mountains, which having been rent by the agency of earthquakes, suffered the waters to escape. Whatever was its origin, the Indian Tempe, though vaunted by less renowned poets, is no way inferior in fertility or beauty to the Thessalian. Fields clothed with eternal green, and sprinkled thick with violets, roses, narcissuses, and other delicate or fragrant flowers, which here grow wild, meet the eye on all sides; while, to divide or diversify them, a number of small streams of crystal purity, and several lakes of various dimensions, glide or sparkle in the foreground of the landscape. On all sides round arise a range of low green hills, dotted with trees, and affording a delicious herbage to the gazelle and other graminivorous animals; while the pinnacles of the Himâlaya, pointed, jagged, and broken into a thousand fantastic forms, rear their snowy heads behind, and pierce beyond the clouds. From these unscaleable heights, amidst which the imagination of the Hindoo has placed his heaven, ever bright and luminous, innumerable small rivulets descend into the valley, and, after rushing in slender cataracts over projecting rocks, and peopling the uplands with noise and foam, submit to the direction of the husbandman, and spread themselves in artificial inundations over the fields and gardens below. These

numerous mountain torrents, which unite into one stream before they issue from the valley, may be regarded as the sources of the Jhylum, one of the mightiest rivers of Hindoostan. The beauty and fertility of Cashmere are equalled by the mildness and salubrity of the climate. Here the southern slopes of the hills are clothed with the fruits and flowers of Hindoostan; but pass the summit, and you find upon the opposite side the productions of the temperate zone and the features of an European landscape. The fancy of Bernier, escaping from the curb of his philosophy, ran riot among these hills, which, with their cows, their goats, their gazelles, and their innumerable bees, might, like the promised land, be said to flow with milk and honey.

"The inhabitants of this terrestrial paradise, who were as beautiful as their climate, possessed, in the time of Bernier, the reputation of being superior in genius and industry to the rest of the Hindoos. The arts and sciences flourished among them, and their manufactures of palanquins, bedsteads, coffers, cabinets, spoons, and inlaid-work, were renowned throughout the East. But the fabric which tended most powerfully to diffuse their reputation for ingenuity were their shawls: those soft and exquisite articles of dress, which, from that day to this, have enjoyed the patronage of the fair throughout the world[62]."

No traveller ever enjoyed a more favourable opportunity than Bernier of examining Cashmere. Attached to the train of Aurungzebe, every place was open to his curiosity, and his taste and habits led him carefully to scrutinize whatever came within the range of his observation.

[62] Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 210, 211. I have here preferred quoting what I had written elsewhere to the useless task of repeating the same thing in different words.

"During the three months which he spent in this beautiful country he made several excursions to the surrounding mountains, where, amidst the wildest and most majestic scenery, he beheld with wonder the natural succession of generation and decay. At the bottom of many precipitous abysses, whither man's foot had never descended, he saw many enormous trunks hurled down by time, and heaped upon each other in decay; while at their foot, or beneath their crumbling branches, young ones were shooting up and flourishing. Some of the trees were scorched and burnt, either blasted by the thunderbolt, or, according to the traditions of the peasantry, set on fire during the heat of summer by rubbing against each other when agitated by fierce burning winds.

"The court, having visited Cashmere from motives of pleasure, were determined to taste every species of it which the country could supply; the wild and sublime which must be sought with toil and difficulty, as well as those more ordinary ones which lay strewed like flowers upon the earth. The emperor accordingly, or at least his harem, ascended the lower range of hills to enjoy the prospect of abyss and precipice, impending woods, dusky and horrible, and streams rushing forth from their dark wombs, and leaping with thundering and impetuous fury over cliffs of prodigious elevation. One of these small cataracts appeared to Bernier the most perfect thing of its kind in the world; and Jehanghir, who passed many years in Cashmere, had caused a neighbouring rock, from which it could be contemplated to most advantage, to be levelled, in order to behold it at his ease. Here a kind of theatre was raised by Aurungzebe for the accommodation of his court; and there they sat viewing with wondering delight this sublime work of nature, surpassing in grandeur, and by the emotions to which it gave birth, all the wonders of man's hand.

In this instance the stream was beheld at a considerable distance rolling along its weight of waters down the slope of the mountain, through a sombre channel overhung with trees. Arriving at the edge of the rock the whole stream projected itself forward, and curving round in its descent, like the neck of a war-horse, plunged into the gulf below with deafening and incessant thunder[63]."

Moorcroft, whose remarks on the natural productions and agriculture of Cashmere have recently been published in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, concurs in the opinion that Cashmere has been formerly one immense lake, and he observes that the subsidence of its waters is distinctly defined by horizontal lines on the face of the mountain. The nature of the composition of the highest and primitive mountains which form the great outer belt of the valley, Moorcroft had not an opportunity to examine; but the rocks of the interior he found to be of secondary formation, and consisting to a great extent wholly of indurated clay. "The bottom of the basin," he says, "is covered with a deep coat of alluvial clay, which, in its progress towards the surface, is mixed with vegetable earth; and the latter, under very slight labour, breaks down into a rich and most productive mould [64]."

From Cashmere, which is, in fact, an isolated spot, we proceed across the interjacent district of Kohistan to the small province denominated Setlej and Jumna, from the two great rivers between which it is situated. This province forms a portion of that Alpine country which, by Indian geographers, is named Northern Hindoostan, and extends in a waving parallelogram, slanting to the south, from longitude 77°, a little to the west of the Setlej, to the river Teesta, in longi-

[63] Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 212, 213.
[64] Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. ii. p. 253.

tude 88° 30′ E., beyond which, among the mountains, the Lama doctrines prevail. The division of this country which, for brevity, I shall denominate the Province of the Jumna, is bounded on the north by the Himâlaya mountains, on the west by the Setlej, on the south by Delhi, and on the east by the Jumna river. It may be estimated at about ninety miles in length by about sixty in breadth; and is divided into four principalities, twelve lordships, and fourteen petty chiefships[65].

The province of Gurwal or Serinagur[66], the next

[65] Hamilton's Description of Hindostan, vol. ii. p. 602.

[66] Captain Raper, who visited these countries during his survey of the Ganges, gives the following sketch of the valley of Serinagur:—"On taking a view of Serinagur from a height, it has the appearance of a double valley; one situated on a level with the river, the other on its banks, elevated about forty or fifty feet, and extending along the base of the mountain. The lower one, in which the city stands, has apparently been formed by the receding of the Alacananda from the south shore; and although the period be too remote to ascertain the fact, the appearance of the ridge or bank, marking the concavity, would incline one to suppose that such has been the case; and that in its present progressive inclination it is gradually returning to its former channel. From the bottom of the upper valley to the city is a space of three or four furlongs laid out in small fields and inclosures, with a few mango trees thinly scattered among them. Opposite to the city the Alacananda divides into two or three streams, which reunite about one mile below. On one of the small islands are the ruins of buildings which were formerly connected with the city. The aspect of the surrounding mountains is very barren; here or there a solitary tree may be seen, but the general features betray a rocky and unfriendly soil; and the little vegetation that is produced upon them is soon parched up and dried. On the opposite side of the river several hamlets are seen situated along the foot of the hills, with which a communication is open by a Ihula to the west, and a ferry-boat to the east of the city. One of the largest of these villages is called Rani Hat't, containing a temple sacred to Raja Iswara, at whose shrine some rites are performed in imitation of the mysteries observed in the temple of the Cyprian goddess." Asiat. Res. vol. xi. p. 503.

division of Northern Hindoostan, is bounded on the west by the Jumna; on the north by the Himâlaya; on the east by the Dauli, Alacananda, and Râmganga rivers, which separate it from Nepâl; and on the south by the great plain of the Ganges. The character and aspect of the country are thus described by Hamilton: —"To the southward, towards Lolldong, the whole face of this country is an assemblage of hills, jumbled together in many forms and directions; sometimes in chains running parallel to each other, and of no great extent, and often connected at their termination by narrow ridges, running across the valleys at right angles. The summits of these are usually narrow and of various shapes, and the distance between each range short; the valleys in consequence are so confined that in many parts it would be difficult to find a spot large enough to accommodate a corps of one thousand men. Some of these ranges are covered with trees and always green; others are naked and stony, affording shelter for neither birds nor beasts. On the eastern borders of these provinces, among the lower ranges of mountains, are extensive forests of oak, holly, horse-chesnut, and fir; and beds of strawberries are also seen, equalling in flavour those of Europe. From Lolldong to the Ganges the country forms, with very little interruption, a continued chain of woody hills, which extend eastward to an undefined extent. In these forests the elephant abounds, but greatly inferior in size and quality to the Chittagong elephant, on which account it is seldom domesticated. On the eastern borders there are hill pheasants among the mountains, but they keep near the summit, and seldom venture into the valleys unless compelled by heavy falls of snow. Indeed but a small part of this extensive country is either populated or cultivated, a great proportion of its surface being left in undisturbed possession of the wild animals[67]."

[67] Description of Hindostan, vol. ii, p. 633, 634.

The kingdom of Nepâl, the most extensive and important province of Northern Hindoostan, is bounded on the north by the Himâlaya[68] mountains, which

[68] Of this country there is a curious account given in the Asiatic Researches, written by Father Giuseppe, Prefect of the Roman Mission. "Although the road," says he, describing the entrance into Nepâl, "be very inconvenient and narrow for three or four days at the passes of the hills, where it is necessary to cross and recross the river more than fifty times, yet on reaching the interior mountain before you descend, you have an agreeable prospect of the extensive plain of Nepâl, resembling an amphitheatre, covered with populous towns and villages. The circumference of the plain is about two hundred miles, a little irregular and surrounded by hills on all sides, so that no person can enter or come out of it without passing the mountains. There are three principal cities in the plain, each of which was the capital of an independent kingdom; the principal city of the three is situated to the northwards of the plain, and is called Cat'hmandoo; it contains about eighteen thousand houses; and this kingdom, from south to north, extends to the distance of twelve or thirteen days' journey, as far as the borders of Tibet, and is almost as extensive from east to west. Besides these three principal cities there are many other large and less considerable towns and fortresses; one of them is Timi and another Cipoli, each of which contains about eight thousand houses and is very populous. All these towns, both great and small, are well built; the houses are constructed of brick, and are three or four stories high; their apartments are not lofty; they have doors and windows of wood, well worked, and arranged with great regularity. The streets of all their towns are paved with brick or stone, with a regular declivity to carry off the water. In almost every street of the capital towns there are also good wells made of stone, from which the water passes through several stone canals for the public benefit. In every town there are large square verandahs, well built for the accommodation of travellers and the public. These verandahs are called *Pali;* and there are also many of them, as well as wells, in different parts of the country, for public use. There are also on the outside of the great towns small square reservoirs of water, faced with brick, with a good road to walk upon, and a large flight of steps for the convenience of those who choose to bathe. A piece of water of this kind, on the outside of the city of Cat'hmandoo, was at least two hundred feet long on each side of the square, and every part of its workmanship had a good appearance." Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 307, &c. The two principal works on

separate it from Tibet; on the west by Kumaoon; on the south by Delhi, Oude, Bahar, and Bengal; and on the east by the principality of Sikkim. Its extreme length may be estimated at four hundred and sixty, and its breadth at one hundred and fifteen miles. This singular country consists of three parallel belts, of which the first, about twenty miles in breadth, is a portion of the Gangetic plain. Next succeeds a region of nearly the same width, consisting of a series of small hills rising behind each other like a succession of terraces, until the more elevated gradually unite with the more lofty mountains of the Himâlaya. Through the rocky valleys or chasms which separate these hills, numerous streams, springing from the southern faces of the mountains, descend and spread fertility and verdure throughout the country. Magnificent forests of *saul* (Shorea robusta), mingled with *sisoo* (Dalbergia sisoo) and *toon* (Cedrela toona) trees, stretch along the declivities of the minor eminences for a considerable distance into the adjacent plains. As you ascend, the forests exhibit a greater variety, gradually putting on more and more of Alpine features, as the sombre pine mingles more freely with the mimosa and other trees of the plain. Parrots, parroquets, and many other species of birds, abound in these woods, and are caught and taught to speak by the natives, who export them into Bengal, as the inhabitants of the Tyrol export Canary birds to all parts of Europe. Between the hills and the Himâlaya fine cultivated valleys are sometimes met with; but, though fertile, they are generally neglected on account of their extreme unhealthiness. Some of these wild glens produce rattans and bamboos of enormous dimensions; in others nothing but pines and oaks are

this country are Kirkpatrick's Account of the Kingdom of Nepâl, London, 1811, 4to.; and Francis Hamilton's Account of the Kingdom of Nepâl, Edinburgh, 1819, 4to.

found, while a third class ripen the pine-apple and the sugar-cane. Others again produce barley, millet, and many similar grains. Peaches grow wild by every rill, but never ripen; and the vines, requiring more care than is bestowed upon them, produce but inferior grapes. But the orange, which ripens in winter, is found in the greatest perfection in Nepâl. Ginger, cardamoms, and grain of every kind are abundant, Cat'hmandoo, the capital, stands on the east bank of the Bishenmutty, four thousand seven hundred and eighty-four feet above the plains of Bengal. It is of inconsiderable extent. The most remarkable objects it contains are a great number of wooden temples, which, as well as those constructed of brick, appear to be in the Chinese style of architecture, with three or four sloping roofs. None but the priests and princes are admitted within the shrine. The houses are three or four stories high, an indication that earthquakes are not frequent; and the streets, which are exceedingly narrow, rival those of Benares in filth. The population may amount to about twenty thousand.

The principality of Sikkim, a small and little explored province, lying between Nepâl and Bhotan, is situated entirely among the hills; and its productions, both vegetable and mineral, entirely resemble those of Nepâl. "According to native authorities," says Hamilton, "there are on the Konki two marts, named Bilasi and Majhoya, to which the traders from the plains carry rice, salt, extract of sugar-cane, hogs, dry fish, tobacco, spirituous liquors, and various cloths. Before the Ghorkha conquest they also took oxen for the slaughter; but that tribe, being Hindoos, prohibited such sacrilege. The traders procured in return from the mountaineers cotton, Indian madder, musk, and Tibet cow and bull tails. At Dimali, on the Balakongyar river, there is a mart or custom-

house, consisting of a square surrounded by buildings, into which the merchants and their commodities are received, there being no other dwellings except those of the collector and his assistants. To this place the dealers from the low-country take up salt, tobacco, cotton cloths, goats, fowls, swine, iron, and occasionally broad-cloth; and in return bring back mungeet or Indian rubber, cotton, bees' wax, blankets, horses, musk, cow and bull tails, Chinese flowered silk, and rhinoceroses' horns[69]."

The city of Sikkim stands on the west bank of the Jamikuma river, which rises on the south side of the Snowy Mountains, and, opposite to the town, separates into two branches, that flow round an immense mountain, upon the summit of which there is a stronghold named Tasidong.

The river Tista, which comes from the mountains in about 88° 32′ E. long. from Greenwich, divides Sikkim from the territory of Bhotan, a mountainous tract, situated like Nepâl on the southern declivity of the Himâlaya chain; the highest part of which separates it from Tibet and the Chinese empire. The country is about two hundred and forty English miles in length, from E. to W.; the width of Bhotan Proper does not probably exceed forty or fifty miles. South from that is a hilly, but lower tract of perhaps ten or fifteen miles in width, which is occupied by Cachharis, Mech, and other rude tribes; and south from thence is a plain, which in different parts varies from ten to twenty miles in width, and which is chiefly occupied by Coch or Rajbangsis. The inhabitants, called Bhoteas, are Buddhists. A person who is considered as an incarnation of God, and who is named Dharma-Raja, is their nominal head, but the government is carried on by the Deva-Raja, his vicegerent.

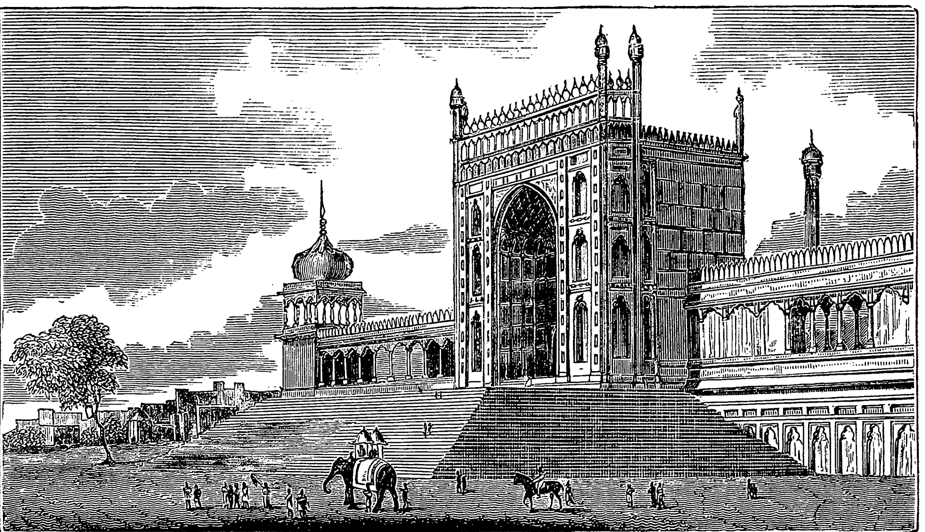
Assam is situated towards the south-east of Bhotan, and borders towards the south-west on Bengal, and

[69] Description of Hindostan, vol. ii. p. 270, 271.

towards the east and south-east on China and the Burmese empire. It is traversed by the Brahmaputra. The extent of the territory of Assam, towards the north of this river, is about two hundred and eleven miles in length, and from twenty to thirty miles in width. On the south side of the Brahmaputra, the length of Assam is only about one hundred and seventy-four, and its width from twenty-five to forty miles. The island of Majuli, formed by the Brahmaputra and Dihing rivers, which is about one hundred and thirty miles long, and ten or fifteen wide, also belongs to Assam. The principal towns are Rangpoor and Gohati. Gold is found in the sand at the junction of the river Donsiri or Donhiri with the Brahmaputra[70].

Having thus made the circuit of Hindoostan, I proceed to describe the central regions, commencing with the imperial province of Delhi. Bounded on the west by Ajmere and Lahore, on the north by Lahore and Northern Hindoostan, on the east by Oude, and on the south by Agra, its greatest length may be estimated at two hundred and forty, and its breadth at one hundred and eighty miles. The northern districts, overrun with forests and jungles, are thinly peopled; and the land, though fertile, but indifferently cultivated. Though naturally inferior to Agra in fertility, the low lands produce, when properly irrigated, three crops of rice in the year; indeed no portion of Hindoostan seems more susceptible of improvement by irrigation, and it has by a very judicious author been thought probable that an immense extent of moving sand, now abandoned to drought and barrenness, and menacing the surrounding regions with desolation, might be again brought into cultivation. Numerous canals and streams, which formerly traversed the northern districts of Delhi, and, among the rest, the great river Saraswati,

[70] See Dr. Francis Hamilton's Account of Assam, in the Annals of Oriental Literature, p. 193—278.



Page 70. Jumna Musjeed, Delhi.

have long ceased to flow; though, with little comparative labour or expense, these rivers might be again conducted into their ancient channels, and made to diffuse fertility and wealth over the province. Compared with Bengal and the Company's old provinces, Delhi is but thinly peopled, says Hamilton, its inhabitants probably not exceeding eight millions.

The city of Delhi, the Indraprast'ha of the Hindoos, is situated on the banks of the Jumna, in lat. 28° 41′ N., long. 77° 5′ E. During the era of its splendour, it is said to have covered a space of twenty square miles, and in fact its ruins are at this day very little less in extent. What its population may have amounted to, when it was the capital of the Mogul empire, cannot now be ascertained [71]. Hamilton is of opinion that the number does not exceed two hundred thousand. The modern city contains many magnificent ruins, and a great number of mosques still in good preservation; of which the principal is the Jumna Musjeed, erected by the Emperor Shah Jehan. But the great ornament of Delhi is the imperial palace, constructed of red granite, in a beautiful style of architecture. Its interior is adorned with gold, azure, and other splendid ornaments. The stables were erected to contain ten thousand horses. In the vast suburbs of Delhi, among other striking buildings, is

[71] In the time of Bernier, Delhi was doubtless a magnificent city. "Whatever Asia could furnish of barbaric pomp or gorgeous show, was there collected together, and disposed with as much taste as Mogul or Persian art could give birth to. Domes of vast circumference and fantastic swell crowned the summits of the mosques, and towered above the other structures of the city; palaces, cool, airy, grotesque, with twisted pillars, balustrades of silver, and roofs of fretted gold; elephants moving their awkward and cumbrous bulk to and fro, disguised in glittering housings, and surmounted with golden howdahs; and gardens shaded and perfumed by the most splendid trees and sweetest flowers of Asia: such were the principal features of Delhi." Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 204.

the *Godaïe Kotelar*, the principal apartment of which, called the "Hall of Embassies," was lined throughout with crystal, and adorned with a lustre of black crystal, exquisitely wrought, which, when lighted up, caused the apartment to present on all sides the appearance of a conflagration. In this hall a peacock throne was still preserved in the time of Legoux de Flaix[72], wholly different from that described by Bernier, and which was carried away by Nadir Shah[73]. It was of an oval form, and placed under a palm-tree, which overshadowed it with its foliage. A peacock perched upon a branch near the summit, extended its wings like a canopy over the throne. Both the palm-tree and the peacock were of gold, and the wings and leaves so delicately and exquisitely formed, that they appeared to wave and tremble at the slightest breeze. The rich green of the peacock's feathers was represented by superb emeralds; and the fruit of the palm-tree, formed of brilliant Golconda diamonds, mimicked nature so admirably, that the observer might easily have been tempted to pluck them.

The gardens of the Shalimar, a mile in circumfe-

72 Essais sur l'Indoustan, tom. i. p. 193.

73 "Il y avait," says the historian of Nadir, "entre autres (trésors) un trône en forme de paon, qui sembloit renfermer tous les trésors de Kaikavus et les richesses de Dekianous, et dont les joyaux dans les temps des anciens empereurs des Indes étoient évalués à deux crores, chaque crore (selon la computation Indienne) valant cent mille lacs, et chaque lac cent mille roupies. Il y avoient de plus des perles si parfaites et des diamans si brillans, qu'on n'avait jamais vu de semblables dans les trésors d'aucun monarque du monde; et le tout fut transporté dans celui de Nadir Chah." Works of Sir William Jones, vol. ix. p. 459. "The throne was supported upon six large feet of massive gold, set with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. But its principal ornaments were two peacocks, whose feathers were imitated by a crest of pearls and jewels. The real value of this throne could not be exactly ascertained, but it was estimated at four crores, or forty millions of rupees.' Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 202.

rence, formed by Shah Jehan at an expense of one million sterling, are now, like all his other works, in ruins; and from these the view southward, as far as the eye can reach, is covered with the wreck of mosques, pavilions, and tombs, all desolate and decayed. About nine miles south of Delhi stands the Kuttub Minar, a remarkable column, two hundred and forty-two feet high. Four balconies sweep round the pillar at different heights from the ground, and an irregular spiral staircase leads to the summit, which is crowned with a majestic cupola of red granite. It seems to have been intended as a minaret to a stupendous mosque never completed, and was erected about six hundred years ago by the Afghan emperor Kuttub Shah, whose tomb, a humble and inconsiderable building[74], stands a few hundred yards to the west of it. Kuttub Shah died in A. D. 1210.

Oude, one of the smallest provinces of Hindoostan Proper, is bounded on the west by Delhi and Agra, on the north by Nepâl, on the east by Bahar, and on the south by Allahabad. "The whole surface of this province is level, and exceedingly well watered by large rivers, or by copious streams which intersect the country, flowing nearly all in a south-east direction. When properly cultivated the land is extremely productive, yielding crops of wheat, barley, rice, and other grains, sugar-canes, indigo, poppies for opium, and all the richer articles raised in India. The air and climate are suited to the spontaneous generation of nitre, from the brine of which an inferior culinary salt is procured, by evaporating the saltpetre brine to a certain degree, which, although at first much contaminated by bitter salt, may be easily refined to a

[74] Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 223—228. Tieffenthaler speaks of the tomb as that of "a Mohammedan hypocrite," tom. i. p. 132. Bishop Heber, describing the Kuttub Minar, observes, "it is really the finest tower I have ever seen, and must, when its spire was complete, have been still more beautiful." Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 307.

purer state. Lapis lazuli is also a production of this province, the colour procured from which sells in England at about nine guineas per ounce[75]."

Lucknow, the modern capital, stands on the south bank of the Goomty. Its narrow filthy streets, in which two carts cannot pass each other, are sunk, in the quarter inhabited by the lower orders, at least ten or twelve feet below the level of the soil. The houses are of clay and of mean appearance, and every nook and angle swarms with beggars. In the better part of the city, however, there are some fine streets, handsome houses, and well-filled bazaars; and the palaces of the Nawab, the tombs and principal mosques, constructed in a highly ornamental style of architecture, with gilded roofs, display considerable splendour. "The Imâmbar or cathedral," says Bishop Heber, "consists of two courts rising with a steep ascent one above the other. It contains, besides a splendid mosque, a college for instruction in Musulman law, apartments for the religious establishment maintained there, and a noble gallery, in the midst of which, under a brilliant tabernacle of silver, cut glass, and precious stones, lie buried the remains of its founder, Assuf-ud-Dowlah. The whole is in a very noble style of eastern Gothic, and when taken in conjunction with the Roumi Durwazu, which adjoins it, of which I add a sketch from memory, I have never seen an architectural view which pleased me more from its richness and variety, as well as the proportions and general good taste of its principal features[76]."

Oude, (in Sanscrit, *Ayodhya*), the ancient capital of the great Râma, situated on the banks of the Goggra, though now reduced to a shapeless heap of ruins, is still the resort of numerous pilgrims, who walk round the supposed sites of the temples, bathe

[75] Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i. p. 338.
[76] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 51, 52; Hamilton, vol. i. p. 347.

in the holy pools, and perform the customary ceremonies. Vâlmîki, the great epic poet of Hindoostan[77], has, as Colonel Tod remarks, converted this city into an Utopia; but, however exaggerated, his description may be supposed to have borne some resemblance to the original. "On the banks of the Sarayu," says he, "is a large country called Kosala, in which is Ayodhya, built by Menu, twelve yojanas (forty-eight miles) in extent, with streets regular and well watered. It is filled by merchants, beautified with gardens, ornamented with stately gates and high arched porticos, furnished with arms, crowded with chariots, elephants, and horses; and with ambassadors from foreign lands; embellished with palaces, whose domes resemble the mountain-tops, dwellings of equal height, resounding with the delightful music of the tabor, the flute, and harp. It was surrounded by an impassable moat, and guarded by archers. Dasarat'ha was its king, a mighty charioteer. *There were no atheists.* The affections of the men were in their consorts. The women were chaste and obedient to their lords, endowed with beauty, wit, sweetness, prudence, and industry, with bright ornaments, and fair apparel; the men devoted to truth and hospitality; regardful of their superiors, their ancestry, and their gods[78]."

77 See Râmâyana, book i. ch. 5.

78 Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 38, note. Abul Fazl, who loves to repeat the legends of antiquity, observes that "in ancient times, this city is said to have measured one hundred and forty-eight coss in length, and thirty-six coss in breadth. It is esteemed one of the most sacred places of antiquity. Upon sifting the earth which is round the city, small grains of gold are sometimes obtained from it. In the Treta-Yuga, this city was the residence of Raja Ramchund, who enjoyed the two-fold office of king and prophet. At the distance of a coss from the city, the river Gogra unites with the Sy, which confluence runs at the foot of the fort." Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 32, 33.

The province of Bahar is bounded on the west by Allahabad and Oude, on the north by Nepâl, on the east by Bengal, and on the south by Gundwana. With the exception of a few mountainous districts, the whole of this extensive province is a plain, as fertile, highly cultivated, and populous as any in Hindoostan. It possesses great natural advantages; a temperate climate, abundant water for irrigation, and a geographical position which renders it the thoroughfare for the commerce of Bengal, and of foreign maritime countries, with the upper provinces of India. In several districts a parching west wind generally prevails during the hot season: it blows however only by day, being succeeded at night by a cool breeze from the east. During the winter a blighting frost is sometimes experienced. Opium[79] is the staple

[79] Of this narcotic vast quantities are manufactured in India. The following is the manner in which the poppy is cultivated. "The poppy (*papaver somniferum*) is plentifully cultivated both for making opium and on account of the seed, which is much used in the sweet cakes that are eaten by the higher ranks of the natives. In Aswaja (19th September to 18th October) dig the ground one cubit deep. In the following month smooth the ground, and divide it into small plots of three cubits square, separated from each other by small banks, like those of rice-fields, but neater and lower, and at the same time form channels winding through the plots, so that every one may have a channel running past one of its sides. By this method any quantity of water which the plant requires is very readily conveyed to the whole. When the channels and squares are formed, the garden is dunged, and the poppy-seed sown. Over this is sprinkled a little more dung. At every span's length, two seeds of the *cossumba* are then planted on the small mounds which separate the squares; or in place of *cossumba*, radishes are sometimes raised. Water is then given to every square, and once in four days this is repeated. After the plants have acquired strength, no preference is given to any particular time of the day for watering; but while they are very young, the morning is preferred. In six or seven days the poppies will be two inches high; and then the gardener with a shell removes those that are superfluous, so as to leave

commodity of the country. Saltpetre, cotton cloths, sugar, betel-leaf, attar, and a variety of other flower-essences are also exported from Bahar. The principal cities of the province are Patna, which now exceeds both Delhi and Agra in extent and population; Bahar the ancient, and Gaya the modern capital. The last-named city is divided into two very distinct portions; the old town, standing on an eminence, inhabited by the priests; and the new town, situated upon a plain, which is the residence of the laity. Here, according to the European taste, the streets are perfectly straight and kept in good order, though unpaved, having a row of trees and a footway on each side, with an excellent carriage-way in the centre. The old town is a strange-looking place. The houses, constructed of stone or brick, two or three stories high, are built in a very picturesque style of architecture, with corners, turrets, and gal-

them four inches apart. In twenty days they are about six inches high; the weeds must then be removed with a small hoe, and a very little dung must be given. In two months and a half the poppy is ready for making opium, and in three months the seed is ripe. It is not injured by extracting the opium, which operation is performed by the gardeners, who sell the produce to the drug-merchant. When the poppies are ripe, the fruit is scratched with a thorn, and the juice that exudes, after it has thickened by exposure to the air, is scraped off with a shell, and seems to be very good opium." Buchanan, i. 295; iii. 444. As it dries it is formed into lumps, which are wrapped up in coverings made of the flower-leaves of the poppy, joined together by placing them, while fresh, on a hot earthen pot. Some women earn a subsistence by preparing these coverings, which are sent to the factory ready joined. In the evening each capsule of the poppy, as it attains the proper degree of maturity, has a slight incision made in its whole length; and next morning what opium has exuded is collected. After two or three days, another incision is made at some distance from the first; and according to the size of the capsule it admits of being cut from three to five times; but the crop seasons last six weeks, as the capsules advance at different periods. Hamilton, vol. i. p. 242.

leries projecting in the most irregular and fantastic manner.

The province of Allahabad, two hundred and seventy miles in length, by one hundred and twenty in breadth, is bounded on the north by Oude and a portion of Agra, on the east by Bahar, on the south by Gundwana, and on the west by Malwah and Agra. Traversed in its whole extent by the Ganges, and in great part by the Jumna, which, being navigable, may be considered its great high roads, Allahabad is upon the whole one of the most productive provinces of Hindoostan. The Bundelkund territory, which occupies the south-western portion of the province, is an elevated table-land, diversified with high hills, in which are the strong-holds of numerous chiefs. This division possesses but few rivers : the Kena and Gogra are the principal. Agriculture therefore here depends wholly upon the periodical rains and upon wells. But to compensate for its inferior fertility, Bundelkund contains within its limits the celebrated diamond-mines of Pannah. The population of Allahabad, which is remarkably dense, is supposed to exceed seven millions.

Pannah, the capital of the diamond district, supposed to be the Panassa of Ptolemy, stands on a barren rocky plain, above the Ghauts, and is still an extensive place. It is adorned with several handsome temples, in one of which there is an idol with a diamond eye of immense brilliancy and value. The whole of the table-land for several miles round the city is said to abound with diamonds. The soil, from two to eight cubits in depth, is in some places of a red, in others of a brown colour, and where the diamonds are found, contains many small pebbles. The greater number of the stones do not exceed a pea in size, though occasionally they are found as large as filberts. The workmen, who are generally Rajpoots,



Page 78. City of Agra.

amount on an average to about a thousand. According to their experience, it would seem that the generation of the diamond is here going on perpetually, and that fourteen or fifteen years is the term required by nature for completing the process; for they assert that they have as much chance of success in examining earth which has lain undisturbed during that period as in turning up fresh soil.

The province of Agra is about two hundred and fifty miles in length, by about one hundred and eighty in breadth. It is bounded on the north by the province of Delhi, on the east by Oude and Allahabad, on the south by Malwah, and on the west by Ajmere. North-east of the Jumna the surface of the country is in general flat, open, and bare of trees, but towards the western frontier and south of the Chumbul it is more hilly, and covered with jungle. The climate is generally temperate, and during the winter considerable cold is experienced; but, like the other central regions of India, it is occasionally visited by hot noxious winds. Water is rather scanty throughout the whole of Agra, particularly towards the western frontier and to the north of the Chumbul, where, except in the vicinity of the large rivers, it can only be procured from wells.

The imperial city of Agra, the ancient Mogul capital of Hindoostan, once renowned for its extent and magnificence, is now falling into decay. From the minaret of Akbar's mausoleum at Secundra, six miles north of the city, which commands a view of the whole circumjacent country for a distance of thirty miles, the traveller's eye may take in the entire scene of desolation at once. The whole plain is covered with the ruins of ancient grandeur[80]; and in the

[80] This city was the birth-place of Abul Fazl, who thus speaks of its extent and magnificence. "The river Jumna runs through it for five coss, and on both sides are delightful

distance are seen the mighty Jumna, half a mile broad, and the glittering towers of Agra[81]. The city rises on the banks of the river in the form of a vast semicircle, commanded by the immense fortress, which includes the imperial palace. This palace, which has been denominated one of the finest edifices in Asia, was erected by the emperor Akbar. Like the city it is in the form of a crescent, and stands on the edge of the river, with a terrace in front, reaching down to the water's edge: here, during the flourishing days of Agra, pleasure boats and barges were unceasingly pouring forth their motley crews. The great square of the palace, planted with rows of plantain trees, and surrounded by a beautiful gallery, was adorned by six triumphal arches, which served as the entrances to six noble streets. Along the façade of the palace ran two immense galleries, adorned with twenty-four columns of white marble, springing from pedestals of blue granite, and terminating in capitals of yellow mica. Of the interior, as it exists at present, Bishop Heber says, "The hall, now used as the Dewanny Aum, or public court of justice, is a splendid edifice, supported by pillars and arches of white marble, as large and more nobly simple than that of Delhi. The ornaments, carving, and mosaic of the smaller rooms,

houses and gardens, inhabited by people of all nations, and where are displayed the productions of every climate. His majesty has erected a fort of red stone, the like of which no traveller has ever beheld. It contains alone five hundred stone buildings of surprising construction, in the Bengal, Guzerat, and other styles; and the artificers have decorated them with beautiful paintings. At the eastern gate are carved in stone two elephants with their riders, of exquisite workmanship. In former times Agra was a village dependant upon Byaneh, where Sultan Secunder Lowdy kept his court. Here his majesty has founded a most magnificent city." Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 36.

[81] Hamilton estimates the population of Agra at less than sixty thousand souls, vol. i. p. 365.

in which was formerly the *zenânah*, or ladies' apartment, are equal or superior to any thing which is described as found in the Alhambra. The view from these rooms is very fine; at the same time that there are some adapted for the hot winds, from which light is carefully excluded. This suite is lined with small mirrors in fantastic frames; a cascade of water, also surrounded with mirrors, has been made to gush from a recess at the upper end, and marble channels, beautifully inlaid with cornelians, agates, and jaspers, convey the stream to every side of the apartment[82]."

The great province of Ajmere, or Rajast'han, is bounded on the north by Lahore, on the east by Delhi and Agra, on the south by Malwah and Guzerat, and on the west by Mooltan. It is about three hundred and fifty miles in length, and about two hundred miles upon an average in breadth. Rajast'han is the collective and classical denomination of that portion of India which is "the abode of princes." Its surface is exceedingly varied. Let us, with Colonel Tod, suppose ourselves upon the summit of Mount Aboo (which, after the Himâlaya, is one of the most elevated spots in Hindoostan), and glance our eye from the blue waters of the Indus on the west, to the withy-covered Betwah on the east. Looking in this latter direction, we have before us the chain of the Aravulli hills, stretching north and south throughout the whole length of Rajpootana, from the Vindhya mountains to the confines of Delhi, and dividing Mewar and the other mountainous districts of eastern Ajmere, from Marwar and the sandy deserts of the west. The Aravulli mountains, which, for scenes of savage grandeur, rival or surpass the western Ghauts, repose upon a basis of nearly sixty miles in breadth, and afford shelter in their inexpugnable fastnesses to numerous wild aboriginal tribes, who, from time immemorial, have here

[82] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 338.

maintained a fierce independence and primitive simplicity of manners.

"The general character of the Aravulli is its primitive formation; granite reposing in variety of angle (the general dip is to the east) on massive, compact, dark blue slate, the latter rarely appearing much above the surface or base of the superincumbent granite. The internal valleys abound in variegated quartz and a variety of schistus slate of every hue, which gives a most singular appearance to the roofs of the houses and temples when the sun shines upon them. Rocks of gneiss and of sienite appear in the intervals; and in the diverging ridges, west of Ajmere, the summits are quite dazzling with the enormous masses of vitreous rose-coloured quartz." Mines of copper and tin, the latter yielding a large portion of silver, abound. From the Aravulli, eastward, the country is a lofty table-land, or rather a succession of steppes, resembling those of Tartary. At Rinthumboor the plateau breaks into lofty ranges, their whole summits sparkling in the sun; cragged, but not peaked, and preserving the characteristic formation, though disunited from the mass. "Distinguished as is this elevated region in the surface of Central India, its summit is but little higher than the general elevation of the Vindhya, and upon a level with the valley of Oodipoor and base of the Aravulli. The slope or descent, therefore, from both these ranges to the skirts of the plateau is great and abrupt, of which the most intelligible and simple proof appears in the course of these streams. Few portions of the globe attest more powerfully the force exerted by the action of waters to subdue every obstacle than a view of the rock-bound channels of these streams in this adamantine barrier. Four streams—one of which, the Chumbul, would rank with the Rhine and almost with the Rhone—have here forced their way, laying bare the stratification from the water's level to the

summit, from three to six hundred feet in perpendicular height, the rock appearing as if chiselled by the hand of man. Here the geologist may read the book of nature in distinct characters; few tracts (from Rampoora to Kotah) will be found to be more interesting to him, to the antiquary, or to the lover of nature in her most rugged attire[83]."

West of the Shakhavat frontier, and north of the salt river Loni, the whole of Ajmere is a sandy waste, which becomes more and more barren as you approach the valley of the Indus. The states of Jodpoor and Jessulmere, some account of which was given above, are situated in this sandy plain. The last is every where encircled by the desert, and the fertile district which surrounds the capital, producing wheat, barley, and even rice, may be regarded as an oasis in the midst of desolation. Various other spots remarkable for their fertility are found scattered at wide intervals through the waste. Natron beds, salt lakes, and quarries of beautiful jasper also diversify these dismal plains, which the Hindoos significantly denominate the "region of death[84]."

The province of Malwah, two hundred and twenty miles in length by about one hundred and fifty in breadth, is bounded on the north by Ajmere and Agra, on the east by Allahabad and Gundwana, on the south by Khandeish and Berar, and on the west by Ajmere and Guzerat. It forms a portion of the lofty plateau of Central India[85], but, notwithstanding its elevation, surpasses all the adjacent provinces in

[83] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 12—14.

[84] Until the publication of Colonel Tod's Annals, the province of Ajmere was a kind of *terra incognita;* but the states which he has described are now or ought to be as well known as Bengal. It were to be wished that every part of India possessed so able and so interesting an historian.

[85] Sir John Malcolm, Memoir on Central India, vol. i. p. 20, 514; Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 21, 189.

fertility, the soil being a rich black mould, producing cotton, opium, indigo, tobacco, and corn. Numerous herds of cattle are likewise pastured on the plains. The climate is temperate and favourable to the production of fruits. Malwah possessing no navigable rivers, all its commerce is conducted by land-carriage. Oojein (or Ujjayinî), on the river Sipra, in this province, a city founded in the remotest antiquity, is celebrated in the Purânas, and mentioned in the 'Periplus of the Erythræan Sea,' as well as by Ptolemy, under the name of Ozene. It was the first meridian of the Hindoo astronomers [86].

Khandeish, included within the limits of that portion of India which has been denominated the *Dekkan*, or "the south," is bounded on the north by the course of the Nerbudda, which separates it from Malwah; on the west by Guzerat, on the south by Aurungabad and Berar, and on the east by Berar and Gundwana. It is two hundred and ten miles in length and eighty in breadth. Khandeish formed one of the original provinces of the Mahratta empire, and its broken, rocky, irregular surface is still thickly studded with fortresses. In the vicinity of the Taptee river the country is strangely intersected by deep wild ravines, which sometimes wind along for several miles. The highways frequently lead through the

[86] Hamilton's Description, vol. i. p. 738. Abul Fazl, describing Malwah, observes, "The rivers Nerbudda, Supera (the Sipra?), Kalisindh, Reem, and Lowdy flow through this soobah, and you cannot travel two or three coss without meeting with streams of good water, whose banks are shaded by the wild willow, and other trees; and decorated with the hyacinth, and other beautiful and odoriferous flowers. Here are abundance of lakes, and verdant plains ornamented with innumerable magnificent and elegant buildings. The climate is so temperate, that in winter there is no occasion for warm clothing, nor is it necessary in summer to cool the water with saltpetre; but in the four rainy months the night air is cold enough to render a quilt necessary." Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 39, 40.

bottom of those chasms, where dense clouds of dust, whirled along by the wind, almost suffocate the traveller.

The province of Berar is bounded on the north by Khandeish and Malwah, on the east by Gundwana, and on the south and west by Beeder, Khandeish, and Aurungabad. It consists principally of an elevated valley, to which you ascend by a chain of ghauts or mountain passes. Of these ghauts, the greater number are impassable for carriages, laden camels or bullocks, and many are mere pathways leading over the hills. The high grounds are generally bare of trees. In the valley the soil, though badly cultivated, is naturally rich, spontaneously producing a fine grass. The principal productions of the cultivated districts are wheat, Indian corn, peas, vetches, and flax.

Gundwana, one of the largest provinces of Hindoostan, is bounded on the west by Khandeish, Berar, and Beeder; on the north by Bahar and Allahabad, on the east by Bahar and Orissa, and on the south by Orissa and Hyderabad. Its length may be estimated at about four hundred, and its breadth at nearly three hundred miles. A large portion of this province is mountainous, wild, barren, unhealthy, and, in consequence, thinly inhabited. Those districts which have remained in the possession of the native Goands, are still, to borrow the words of Hamilton, a primeval wilderness.

" The country occupied by the native Goands remains for the most part a primeval wilderness, its human inhabitants being scarcely superior to the beasts with which they are intermixed. A great majority of this miserable tribe exist merely in a state of nature, and are probably the lowest in the scale of civilization of all the natives of India. Having been driven by their invaders from the plains to the un-

wholesome fastnesses of the more elevated regions, they frequently descend during the harvest to the low lands, and plunder the produce of their ancient inheritance. In the course of the last half century the increasing appetite of the wild Goands for salt and sugar, has tended more to promote their civilization than any other circumstance. The sea air is said to be as fatal to their temperament as that of the hill to the inhabitants of the adjoining plains. The Goands are Hindoos of the Brahminical sect, that sacred tribe having condescended to officiate as spiritual directors to some of their chiefs, but they retain many of their impure customs, and abstain from no flesh except that of the ox, cow, and bull[87]."

Beeder is bounded on the north by Aurungabad and Berar, on the east by Gundwana, on the south by Hyderabad, and on the west by Aurungabad and Beejapoor. The face of the country is hilly and uneven, and intersected by numerous small rivers which fertilize the soil. It was formerly, under the old Hindoo government, highly populous; but the days of its prosperity have long passed away, and, compared with the British provinces, it is now thinly inhabited.

The province of Hyderabad, two hundred and eighty miles in length, by one hundred and ten in average breadth, is bounded on the north by Beeder, on the east by Gundwana, on the south by the Circars and Balaghaut, and on the west by Beeder and Beejapoor. It is an elevated table-land of very uneven surface, and the cold during three months of the year is considerable, the thermometer being frequently so low as forty-five or even thirty-five degrees of Fahrenheit, throughout the whole of that period. Though intersected by numerous streams and rivers, none of which, however, are navigable, the soil of Hyderabad is dry.

[87] Hamilton's Description of India, vol. ii. p. 6, 7.

Cultivation is repressed by misgovernment, and ruined towns, villages, and inclosures every where indicate the progress of despotism. Hyderabad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions, formerly Baujnuggur, is an extensive and highly populous city. By old travellers it was commonly denominated Golconda, from the fortress of that name erected in its neighbourhood; and in the time of Tavernier was famous for the beauty of its inhabitants. Golconda, once the capital of an extensive kingdom, and a celebrated diamond mart, is now principally used as a state prison [88].

The Balaghaut ceded Districts are bounded on the west and north by Beejapoor and Hyderabad, on the east by the Circars and the Carnatic, and on the south by Salem and the Mysore. Its principal rivers are the Krishna and the Tumbudra. The soil is generally fertile, particularly the table-land, which, when properly brought into cultivation, requires but one ploughing in twenty years. Indeed the farmer in many cases ploughs his field but once during his lifetime. This rich black mould contains no vestiges of decayed vegetation, but alternates abruptly with red soil, and is found among rocks where trees never could have existed. The rains are uncertain, but generally fall in September and October. The storms of war, which have often swept over this province, have destroyed its fine groves and woods, and rendered the planting of trees, particularly of palmyras, an indispensable duty of government. The general aspect of the country is rugged and wild, like the character of the inhabitants, a bold manly race, who for ages bravely maintained their independence with their sword. Upwards of fifty thousand wells, of which many thousand have been suffered to go

[88] Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 176; Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 141.

out of repair, have been sunk in these districts, for purposes of irrigation.

The Mysore, an extensive province of Southern India, two hundred and ten miles in length, by about one hundred and forty in breadth, is a lofty table-land, nearly three thousand feet above the level of the sea. This lofty plain is enclosed between the eastern and western Ghauts, which lean like so many vast buttresses against the plateau, and prevent its surface from sliding into the ocean. No other country of equal extent within the tropics enjoys so temperate and healthy a climate as the Mysore. The force of the monsoons which deluge the wastes of Coromandel and Malabar, is on both sides broken by the Ghauts; and the rain which falls is merely sufficient to clothe the fields in perpetual verdure, and preserve an agreeable temperature in the air. The principal productions of this province are rice, raghi (*Cynosurus corocanus*), sesamum orientale, the sugar-cane, and the castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*). Cocoa-nut trees are here so numerous that in many districts they resemble forests. Seringapatam, the modern capital, stands upon an island in the Cavery, which is here a large and rapid river.

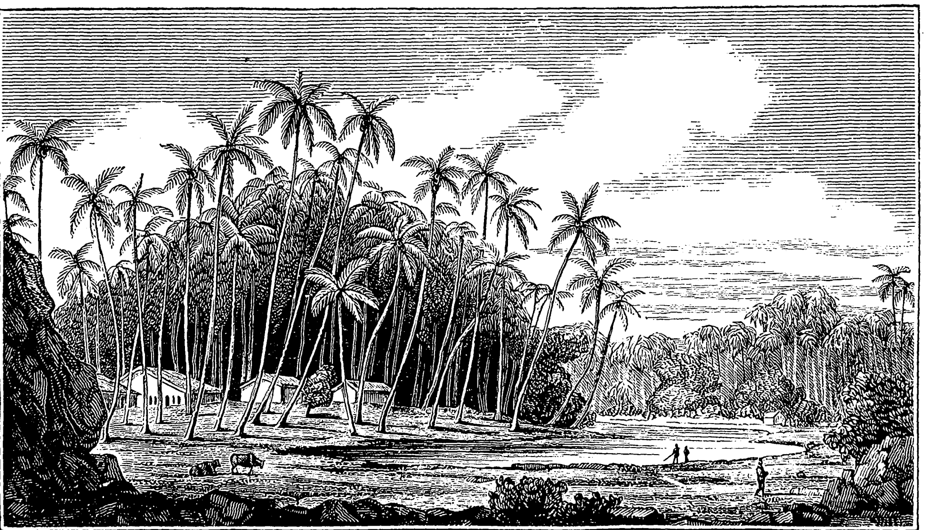
Salem, a small province of Southern India, at present comprehends within its jurisdiction the adjacent territory of Barramahal. Placed on the summit of the table-land between the Ghauts, it enjoys, like the Mysore, a temperate and salubrious climate. The principal productions are Indian corn and rice, and there are generally two harvests in the year; the first in April, and the second in September. This province contains a large proportion of waste lands.

The province of Coimbatore, likewise situated on the lofty table-land of the Dekkan, is about fifty miles in length and forty-five in breadth. Its remarkably undulated surface is in some places not more than

four or five hundred feet above the level of the sea, whilst in others it rises prodigiously, the Cumbetarine hill being between five and six thousand feet above the same level. From Coimbatore the usual descent through the western Ghauts into Malabar, is by an extraordinary funnel-shaped pass, or opening between the mountains, which, being seven miles in breadth at its exit from the plateau, spreads continually to the right and left for a distance of thirty-one miles, until upon meeting with the Malabar plain it presents a mouth of fifteen or sixteen miles in breadth. This opening affords the north-west and south-west winds a free passage from the coast into the interior. Coimbatore is watered by numerous rivers. Though including some marshes, wastes, and jungles, the soil is generally dry and fertile. During the first months of spring the dews are heavy, while thick white fogs enshroud the mountains, and hang upon the plains, until a late hour in the morning. Here, as elsewhere in India, the hills are in many places haunted by malaria; but the climate in general, though hot, is not unhealthy. Immediately towards the north of the gap of Coimbatore is situated the group of the Neil Gherry (Nila Giri), or Blue Mountains, which form the southern extremity of the table-land of Mysore, and rise to an elevation of about nine thousand feet above the level of the sea. The climate of this high region is cool and delightful, and the vegetation is analogous to the Flora of Europe rather than to that of the tropical plains around it. The inhabitants are a peaceable and harmless race of men, who subsist partly on agriculture and partly on the tending of flocks and herds[89].

[89] See Captain Harkness, Description of the Inhabitants of the Neil Gherry Hills; London, 1832, 8vo.

The island of Ceylon, or Singhala, which, though divided by a considerable strait from the continent, once perhaps formed a continuation of it, seems to be necessarily included in a description of India. Its length is about two hundred and seventy, and its greatest breadth about one hundred and forty-five miles. Viewed from the sea, the south-eastern coast of Ceylon presents a picturesque aspect. Hills rise behind hills—some verdant and beautiful, others, like the Swiss Alps, huge, rocky, barren, and of extraordinary shapes, resembling ancient castles, ruined battlements, and pyramids of great altitude. From this rocky mountainous barrier which Ceylon presents to the Indian Ocean, and which occupies a large extent of territory, the surface of the island, as you proceed northward, sinks gradually into extensive plains, in which, excepting the Trincomalee hills, there are no elevations exceeding three hundred feet above the level of the sea. Ceylon is watered by numerous rivers, and, although so near the equator, is not subject to excessive heats, the air being constantly refreshed by breezes from the sea. These, however, are prevented by lofty mountains from penetrating into the interior, where consequently the atmosphere is inflamed and stagnant, except when disturbed by casual currents of wind. A succession of cocoa-nut gardens covers a large portion of the southern shore, while on the northern parts of the island, contiguous to the Coromandel coast, the beautiful palmyra adorns the landscape. Ceylon produces cardamoms, coffee, areca-nuts, tobacco, and a great variety of the finest woods, such as calamander, homander, ebony, viam, and sappan wood; and the tamarind, tulip, and cotton trees. Its fruits and flowers are luxuriantly rich and beautiful. But its most remarkable productions are cinnamon, pearls,



Page 88.

Point de Galle, in the Island of Ceylon.

and rubies. Amidst this profusion of natural riches, Ceylon teems with reptiles, particularly snakes, some of which are thirty feet in length. Alligators as thick as the body of a horse, and little inferior in length to the crocodile of Nubia, are likewise found in the rivers; and the woods and thickets abound with guanas, toads, blood-suckers, leeches, flying lizards, and every species of tropical insects [90].

[90] Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 485—491.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF THE HINDOOS.

HAVING described as briefly as possible the country in which the Hindoos reside, we turn to the origin and antiquity of the people themselves. From the researches which have hitherto been instituted by oriental scholars into the literature of India, it seems sufficiently clear that the Hindoos, notwithstanding the high antiquity of some of their literary monuments, possess no historical works of any very ancient date. Whatever progress in civilization they may have made in the early ages of the world, the era of their establishment in India, the primitive form of their religion and government, and all that succession of great events which constitute the public history of a people, up to a comparatively recent period, must therefore for ever remain unknown. The prodigious antiquity to which the Brahmins lay claim, without proof of any kind, monumental or historical, is a delusion, designed to impose upon a credulous people. Of the origin of their institutions, and the ancient history of their race, they are utterly ignorant. A few vague traditions of remote antiquity are all that remains to guide us in our inquiries concerning the origin and primeval country of this extraordinary people, among whom vanity and a passion for the marvellous, have actively concurred in casting a veil of impenetrable obscurity over historical truth.

The Hindoos do not, like the ancient Athenians, pretend to be *Autochthones*, or sprung from the soil in the very country which they inhabit. There

was, they acknowledge, a time when India was unpeopled, when the children of Brahma inhabited another country, less beautiful, perhaps, and less fertile than their present abode, but still regarded with religious veneration as the birth-place and cradle of their race. This country, the geography and exact position of which have long been obliterated from their memory, they suppose to be situated somewhere in the north, about the roots of the Hindoo Koosh or Indian Caucasus. Here among the pinnacles of Mount Himavan[1] they suppose their great patriarch Menu Vaivaswata ("the sun-born") to have disembarked with the seven famous sages from the ark, where those eight persons had been preserved by Vishnu from the universal deluge, in which all the rest of mankind had perished. Here Menu and his family took up their abode, on Mount Sumeru, or the "Holy Meru," from whence, when considerably multiplied, his posterity descended to the plains.

According to these traditions, which are in perfect consistency with the Hebrew scriptures and the opinions of many eminently learned men, the country first peopled after the flood was situated in that part of the great central plateau of Asia which abuts upon the Himâlaya mountains; that is, in Tibet. Of this country a very erroneous opinion is sometimes entertained. It is supposed to be wild, rugged, and

[1] Creuzer considers Northern India, or rather the lofty plateau abutting on the Himâlaya, in which the four great rivers—the Amu, the Brahmaputra, the Jihoon, and the Indus—take their rise, as the cradle of the human race; from whence, as from a luminous centre, the light of knowledge has spread over the earth. Religions de l'Antiquité, tom. i. p. 133—136. Blumenbach, in his classification of the varieties of the human species, considers the Hindoos as a portion of the Caucasian family, which, in his opinion, comprehends all the nations of Europe, except the Finns and Laplanders; all the Asiatics inhabiting between the Oby, the Caspian Sea, and the Ganges; and the various nations of Northern Africa. De l'Unité de l'Espèce Humaine, p. 286.

savage, as its inhabitants. Few European travellers have visited it. Circumstances unconnected with the physical nature of the country, a jealous despotism, and that barbarism which invariably follows hard upon the heels of political debasement, have surrounded it with an almost impenetrable barrier, at least as regards Europeans. "M. de Guignes," says Sir William Jones, "whose great work on the Huns abounds more in solid learning than in rhetorical ornaments, presents us, however, with a magnificent image of this wild region, describing it as a stupendous edifice, the beams and pillars of which are many ranges of lofty hills, and the dome one prodigious mountain, to which the Chinese give the epithet of celestial[2], with a considerable number of

[2] It was from this sublime country that Bailly, whom Sir William Jones denominates "a wonderfully ingenious man and a very lively writer," supposed the whole human race to have proceeded. But he was not, as our great orientalist imagines, the *first* who maintained this opinion, since we find Sir Walter Raleigh, a century before his time, advocating the same theory. We cannot discover in Bailly's theory the absurdity which Sir William Jones appears to have detected in it; since, even had he placed the first seat of mankind on the banks of the Yenisei, he obviates all objections by maintaining that the temperature of the northern hemisphere has changed, an opinion not altogether destitute of probability. But, in fact, it is in a latitude of forty-nine or fifty degrees that he fixes his first man. Wheat, barley, and several kinds of vegetables grow spontaneously in Siberia. Kæmpfer imagines the Japanese to be descended from the Tatars; and Bailly justly remarks that the veneration of the Hindoos and Chinese for the lofty mountains of Tartary, clearly points to their original dwelling. When the Chinese make libations to the manes of their ancestors, they always turn towards the north pole. In the Institutes of Menu, the student about to commence the reading of Vedas, is directed to turn his face towards the north, ch. ii. ver. 70. The Brahmin is directed to sleep with his head pointing in this direction, ch. iii. ver. 89. On other occasions also he is to turn his face to this point, ch. iv. ver. 50.—Bailly adduces the pilgrimage of the Hindoos to the temple of the Dalai Lama, in Tibet, as an argument in favour of his hypo-

broad rivers running down its sides: if the mansion be so amazingly sublime, the land around it is proportionably extended, but more wonderfully diversified; for some parts of it are incrusted with ice, others parched with inflamed air and covered with a kind of lava: here we meet with immense tracts of sandy deserts and forests almost impenetrable; there with gardens, groves, and meadows, perfumed with musk, watered with numberless rivulets, and abounding in fruits and flowers; and from east to west lie many considerable provinces, which appear as valleys in comparison of the hills towering above them, but in truth are the flat summits of the highest mountains in the world, or at least the highest in Asia. Near one-fourth in latitude of this extraordinary region is in the same charming climate with Greece, Italy, and Provence; and another fourth in that of England, Germany, and the northern parts of France; but the Hyperborean countries can have but few beauties to recommend them, at least in the present state of the earth's temperature. To the south, on the frontiers of Iran, are the beautiful vales of Sogd, with the celebrated cities of Samarkand and Bokhara; on those of Tibet, are the territories of Kashgar, Khoten, Chegil, Khata, all famed for perfumes and the beauty of their inhabitants; and on those of China, lies the country of *Chin*, anciently a powerful kingdom, which name, like that of Khata, has been given to the whole Chinese empire, where such an appellation would be thought an insult. We must not omit the fine country of Tancût, which was known to the Greeks by the name of *Serica*,

thesis; and, in fact, the Sannyasi from Madras encountered by Bell, in Mongolia, as well as those described by Duncan in the Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 37—52, seems to have been actuated by some obscure sentiment of this kind. See, in further illustration of this curious question, Bailly's Lettres sur l'Atlantide; and Lettres sur les Sciences, p. 228—266.

and considered by them as the farthest eastern extremity of the habitable globe[3]."

Upon the southern frontiers of this vast region, in those rich plains and verdant valleys which skirt the foot of the Indian Caucasus, both philosophers and historians concur in fixing the cradle of the Hindoos, if not of all mankind. Here the Brahmins place the abode of Mahadeva, Adiswar, or *Bâghês*, the "Tiger Lord[4]," and the Jains that of Adnat'h, their great patriarch, who first taught men the arts of agriculture and of civilized life.

The site of Mount Meru[5] cannot, as I have

[3] Discourse on the Tatars, Works, vol. iii. p. 72—74.

[4] Some writers have been led by the similarity in sound of the names *Bâghês* and *Bacchus* to assume the identity of the Hindoo and the Greek deity so called, and have considered the present worship of Mahadeva or *Bâghês* in these regions as a confirmation of the supposed expedition of Bacchus into India. It should, however, be observed that the similarity of the names *Bacchus* and *Bâghês* is but accidental; the latter word is a modern vernacular corruption of the ancient Sanscrit *Vyâghrêsa*, which is a compound of *vyâghra*, "a tiger," and *îsa*, "a master or lord." Moreover, the connexion of Bacchus with India, as established on classical evidence, is extremely problematical, and at all events of a comparatively recent date. "The expedition of Bacchus into India," says Schlegel, "which had never previously been spoken of, but which afterwards poets and artists vied with each other in illustrating, was actually invented and thrown back, as it were, into ancient mythology, by Alexander the Great. Wherever ivy grew, he would have it that Bacchus had been; and when the Macedonians saw the troops of king Porus march towards them, keeping time with the beating of cymbals and kettle-drums and the sounding of bells, they did not doubt but that this usage had been handed down to the natives from the time of the riotous processions of Bacchus." Berliner Kalender, 1829, p. 23.

[5] The Abbé Dubois, who merely gives the traditions of the country, supposes that the Brahmins, whom he considers as the descendants of Japhet, entered India from the north-west, from the Hindoo Koosh, their original abode. The sacred books of the Hindoos make mention, he remarks, of two mountains of *Jambu-dwipa* (Scythia), denominated *Mahâ-Meru*, or "Great

already observed, be ascertained exactly. The Hindoos appear to place it somewhere between Baumian, Caubul, and Ghizni, where the abundance of those cavern-dwellings, which were among the earliest abodes of men, would seem, it must be acknowledged, to countenance the idea. "In the midst of the mountains," says Abul Fazl, "are twelve thousand caves cut out of the rock, and ornamented with carving and plaster-work. These places are called *Summij;* and in ancient times were the winter retreat of the natives. Here are three astonishing idols; one representing a man, eighty ells high; another a woman, fifty; and the third, which is the figure of a child, measuring fifteen ells in height. In one of these Summijes is a tomb, where is a coffin containing a corpse, concerning which the oldest man can give no account; but it is held in high veneration. The ancients certainly were in possession of some medical preparations, with which if they anointed dead bodies, and afterwards buried them in a dry soil, they suffered no injury from time [6]." These twelve thousand caverns constitute what is called the city of Baumian, which is situated on the road between Balkh and Caubul, eight days' journey north-west of the latter city. Colonel Wilford denominates Baumian the "Thebes of the East," and observes, that of the vast

Meru," and *Mandara*, from which they invariably assert that the ancestors of the Brahmins came into India. Hence their pious veneration for the north, towards which they look with religious awe, under every circumstance of life. Dubois considers the Hindoos a more ancient people than the Egyptians or Jews. Description, &c. p. 32—40. See also Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 581—589.

[6] Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 169. On the rock-temples of Caubul, see Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 577. For a comparison between these statues and the colossal representations of the Egyptian Memnon, see 'Egypt and Mohammed Ali,' vol. ii. p. 86. Lieut. Burnes, who has recently visited this singular country, describes but two statues, the larger 120, and the smaller about 80 feet in height.

number of apartments or recesses hewn out of the rock, some are of such extraordinary dimensions that they are supposed to have been temples. No pillars have been hitherto discovered, but many of the apartments are adorned with niches and carved work, with paintings half obliterated by smoke and time, and with figures in relievo, barbarously disfigured by the zeal of the Musulmans. The three colossal statues, the dimensions of which have been greatly exaggerated in the Ayeen Akbery, represent some unknown personages—Bhima and his consort, according to the Hindoos, who therefore omit to appropriate the small one, but the Buddhists suppose them to be the statues of two of their sages; while the Mohammedans insist that they are the figures of Kaïumers and his wife and son, three personages of the ancient traditional history of the Persians. The faces of all these figures are turned towards the east (an indication, perhaps, of their Sabean origin), and therefore, when in the morning the first rays of the sun stream upon their countenances, they seem to smile, but look gloomy in the evening. The tiara of the male figure and the dress of both resemble those of the two half-buried statues at Takht-i-Rustam, near Istakhar. "The natives," adds Colonel Wilford, "look upon Baumian and the adjacent countries as the abode of the progenitors of mankind, both before and after the flood. By Baumian and the adjacent countries, they understand all the country from Sistân to Samarkand, reaching towards the east as far as the Ganges. This tradition is of great antiquity, for it is countenanced equally by Persian authors and the sacred books of the Hindoos. The first heroes of Persian history lived and performed there innumerable achievements. Their sacred history places also in that country their holy instructors, and the first temples that were ever erected[7]."

[7] Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 470. The same learned

Colonel Tod, in speaking of the Rajpoots, observes that these warlike tribes could hardly have acquired some of their still-existing Scythic habits and superstitions on the burning plains adjoining the river Indus. "It was too hot to hail with fervent devotion the return of the sun from his southern course, to enliven the northern hemisphere. This should be the religion of a colder clime, brought from their first haunts, the sources of the Jihoon and Jaxartes. The grand solstitial festival, the *Aswamedha*, or sacrifice of the horse (the type of the sun), practised by the children of Vaivaswata, the 'sun-born,' was most probably introduced from Scythia into the plains of Ind[8]."

In these conclusions Colonel Tod had been anticipated by Bailly, a learned and elegant writer, who picked up the idea thrown out by Sir Walter Raleigh, "that India was the first planted and peopled country after the flood," and supported its claims by a chain of very ingenious reasoning. Indeed it appears to be clearly demonstrated, as far at least as subjects of this nature admit of demonstration, that the original country of the Hindoos was situated somewhere to the north of India[9]. The traditions of the Brah-

though fanciful writer elsewhere observes, "that the first descendants of *Swayambhuva* are represented in the Purânas as living in the mountains to the north of India, towards the sources of the Ganges, and downwards as far as Serinagur and Haridwâra. But the rulers of mankind lived on the summit of them, towards the north; where they appear to have established the seat of justice, as the Purânas make frequent mention of the oppressed repairing thither for redress." Vol. v. p. 260.

[8] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 24.

[9] Sir William Jones does not concur in the opinion of Sir Walter Raleigh and Bailly. He considers the Hindoos a colony from *Western Persia* (Fars), but not of Persian race. Yet he derives the *Zend* and *Pehlevi*, ancient dialects of Persia, as well as the language of Hafiz and Saadi, from the Sanscrit. To us, notwithstanding our respect for his learning

mins, recorded in their sacred books, point towards Mahâ-Meru and Mandara, two mountains of Jambudwîpa, or Scythia, as the cradle of their race[10]. Hence their superstitious veneration for the north, towards which they look with a sort of filial reverence in every circumstance of life. A similar feeling of reverence for the north prevails among many other nations of the East. The Chinese, when they make libations to the manes of their ancestors, always turn towards the North Pole; and the opening of the Great Pyramid, and the mysterious chest within, likewise point towards the north[11].

The arguments derived from similarity of religion or manners we omit to insist on in this place; they will be noticed as they occur in other chapters; but it should be remarked as a circumstance corroborative of the views here taken, that the wandering San-

and abilities, all his reasonings on this subject appear wonderfully weak and confused.

[10] Mr. Mill, who seems perfectly to coincide in opinion with Bailly and Sir Walter Raleigh, has the following very judicious remarks on the first peopling of India:—"If we suppose that India began to be peopled at a very early stage in the peopling of the world, its first inhabitants must have been ignorant and rude. Uncivilized and ignorant men, transported in small numbers into an uninhabited country of boundless extent, must wander for many ages before any great improvement can take place." Yet he continues, "the advantages of India in soil and climate are so great, that those by whom it was originally peopled might sustain no further depression than what seems inherent in a state of dispersion. They wandered probably for ages in the immense plains and valleys of that productive region, living on fruits and the produce of their flocks and herds, and not associating beyond the limits of a particular family. Until the country became considerably peopled, it is not even likely that they would be formed into small tribes." History of British India, vol. i. p. 149—151.

[11] Dr. Shaw's Travels in the Levant, p. 374; Bailly, Lettres sur l'Origine des Sciences, p. 236; Egypt and Mohammed Ali, vol. ii. p. 23.

nyasis, who expect to enhance their sanctity by visiting holy places, very frequently undertake pilgrimages to the shrine of the Dalaï Lama, situated within the limits of the sacred northern land.

It might perhaps appear disrespectful to pass over in silence the names of several eminent writers who have maintained the opinions which we have adopted. Linnæus and Buffon regarded Tartary as the earliest peopled country of the earth. Bory de St. Vincent, a clever, ingenious, but arrogant and paradoxical writer, supposes the lofty table-land about the sources of the Indus and the elevated valleys of Serinagur, to be the cradle of the Hindoos[12]; and Malte-Brun, a modest and cautious inquirer, inclines to the same opinion[13]. Guigniaut, the French translator of Creuzer's celebrated work on the Religions of Antiquity, adopts the opinion of Heeren and others, that the Brahmins, and perhaps the Kshatriya and Vaisya castes, were originally a race of northern conquerors, of fair complexion; while the Sudras and other inferior tribes were an aboriginal and a darker race[14].

[12] Essai Zoologique sur l'Homme, tom. i. p. 231. See the whole sect. p. 225—235, with the plates of Péron and Freycinet.

[13] Précis de la Géographie Universelle, tom. iv. p. 127—137.

[14] The Abbé Dubois, as will hereafter be seen, agrees with Heeren, Guigniaut, &c.; but Bishop Heber, who, though he passed a much shorter time in India than Dubois, saw much more of the Hindoos, is of a decidedly different opinion. "The great difference in colour between different natives struck me much: of the crowd by whom we were surrounded, some were black as negroes, others merely copper-coloured, and others little darker than Tunisians, whom I have seen at Liverpool. Mr. Mill, the principal of Bishop's College, who with Mr. Corrie, one of the chaplains in the Company's service, had come down to meet me, and who has seen more of India than most men, tells me that he cannot account for this difference, which is general throughout the country, and every where striking. It is not merely the difference of exposure, since this variety of tint is visible in the fishermen, who are naked all alike. Nor does it depend on caste, since very high-caste Brahmins are sometimes black, while

Just as these pages are going to the press, the second part of the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature has reached us, which contains an interesting dissertation by A. W. von Schlegel, written in French, on the origin of the Hindoos. The author shows that the national tradition current among the Hindoos points towards the northern part of the country now inhabited by them as the earliest seat of their race, and the proper and primeval abode of the Brahminic mode of worship and social institutions. He then proceeds to infer, chiefly from the surprising similarity in structure of their ancient and classical language, the Sanscrit, with the Persian, the Greek, the Latin, and the several Germanic, Lettic, and Slavonic dialects, that the Hindoos and the nations to whom the latter languages belong, form one large family, and must, at some remote period, have had a common abode, whence they emigrated in different directions. This abode was, in Schlegel's opinion, situated in the country to the east of the Caspian Sea, whence the ancestors of the Persians must have proceeded in a south-western, those of the Hindoos in a south-eastern, and those of the European nations in a northern and western direction. The tribe that emigrated towards India must, he thinks, have crossed the Indus near Attok, the only part where that river is passable, and proceeded through the Panjâb, thus entering India by nearly the same route as that followed by Alexander the Great, by Seleucus and the Greek sovereigns of Bactriana, and by nearly all the more recent Mohammedan invaders of India.

Pariahs are comparatively fair. It seems therefore to be an accidental difference, like that of light and dark complexions in Europe, though, where so much of the body is exposed to sight, it becomes more striking here than in our own country." Vol. i. p. 9, 10.

Chapter IV.

ON THE INSTITUTION OF CASTES.

There is hardly any subject connected with India, respecting which the opinions even of respectable writers are so much at variance as on the division of the people into classes or castes. The question, it must be acknowledged, is surrounded with great difficulties. We find original authorities of the highest character differing from each other in many important particulars; while among the European observers of Hindoo society, the greatest confusion of ideas has in general prevailed. Robertson, in his Historical Disquisition concerning the knowledge of India possessed by the ancients, has embodied in very eloquent language the popular notions on the institution of castes. "From the most ancient accounts of India we learn," says he, "that the distinction of ranks and separation of professions were completely established there. This is one of the most undoubted proofs of a society considerably advanced in its progress. Arts, in the early stages of social life, are so few and so simple, that each man is sufficiently master of them all to gratify every demand of his own limited desires. A savage can form his bow, point his arrows, rear his hut, and hollow his canoe without calling in the aid of any hand more skilful than his own. But when time has augmented the wants of men, the productions of art become so complicated in their structure or so curious in their fabric, that a particular course of education is requisite towards forming the artist to ingenuity in con-

trivance and expertness in execution. In proportion as refinement spreads, the distinction of professions increases, and they branch into more numerous and minute subdivisions. Prior to the records of authentic history, and even before the most remote era to which their own traditions pretend to reach, this separation of professions had not only taken place among the natives of India, but the perpetuity of it was secured by an institution which must be considered as the fundamental article in the system of their policy. The whole body of the people was divided into four orders or castes. The members of the first, deemed the most sacred, had it for their province to study the principles of religion, to perform its functions, and to cultivate the sciences. They were the priests, the instructors, and the philosophers of the nation. The members of the second order were intrusted with the government and defence of the state. In peace they were its rulers and magistrates, in war they were the generals who commanded its armies and the soldiers who fought its battles. The third was composed of husbandmen and merchants; and the fourth of artisans, labourers, and servants. None of those can ever quit his own caste or be admitted into another. The station of every individual is unalterably fixed; his destiny is irrevocable; and the walk of life is marked out, from which he must never deviate. This line of separation is not only established by civil authority, but confirmed and sanctioned by religion; and each order or caste is said to have proceeded from the Divinity in such a different manner, that to mingle or confound them would be deemed an act of most daring impiety. Nor is it between the four different tribes alone that such inseparable barriers are fixed; the members of each caste adhere invariably to the profession of their forefathers. From generation to generation the same

families have followed, and will always continue to follow, one uniform line of life[1]."

This picture of Indian society may, perhaps, be thought to represent not only a real but an enviable state of things, particularly as the historian immediately proceeds to enumerate the many great advantages[2]

[1] Historical Disquisition, &c., Appendix, sect. i. p. 177—179.

[2] They who have witnessed the actual results of this system, even modified as it has been by time and circumstances, will be surprised to find how many advantages Robertson ascribes to it. "The object," he observes, "of the first Indian legislators was to employ the most effectual means of providing for the subsistence, the security and happiness of all the members of the community over which they presided. With this view, they set apart certain races of men for each of the various professions and arts necessary in a well-ordered society, and appointed the exercise of them to be transmitted from father to son in succession. This system, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different state of society, have formed, will be found, upon an attentive inspection, better adapted to attain the end in view than a careless observer, at first sight, is apt to imagine. The human mind bends to the law of necessity, and is accustomed, not only to accommodate itself to the restraints which the condition of its nature, or the institutions of its country impose, but to acquiesce in them. From his entrance into life, the Indian knows the station allotted to him, and the functions to which he is destined by his birth. The objects which relate to these, are the first that present themselves to his view. They occupy his thoughts or employ his hands; and from his earliest years, he is trained to the habit of doing with ease and pleasure what he must continue through life to do. To this may be ascribed that high degree of perfection conspicuous in many of the Indian manufactures; and though veneration for the practices of their ancestors may check the spirit of invention, yet by adhering to these, they acquire such an expertness and delicacy of hand, that Europeans, with all the advantages of superior science, and the aid of more complete instruments, have never been able to equal the exquisite execution of their workmanship. While this high improvement of their more curious manufactures excited the admiration and attracted the commerce of other nations, the separation of professions in India and the early distribution of the people into classes, attached to particular

which he supposes must have arisen from such an arrangement. Before we examine how far the picture resembles the original, it may be desirable to adduce the opinion of another distinguished writer, who does not differ very materially from Robertson. Having described, from various ancient authorities, the splendid condition of the priestly caste, this author adds: "Those prerogatives or privileges, important and extraordinary as they may seem, afford, however, but an imperfect idea of the influence of the Brahmins in the intercourse of Hindoo society. As the greater part of life among the Hindoos is engrossed by the performance of an infinite and burdensome ritual, which extends to almost every hour of the day, and every function of nature and society, the Brahmins, who are the sole judges and directors in these complicated and endless duties, are rendered uncontrollable masters of human life. Thus elevated in power and privileges, the ceremonial of society is no less remarkably in their favour. They are so much superior to the king, that the meanest Brahmin would account himself polluted by eating with him, and death itself would appear to him less dreadful than the degradation of permitting his daughter to unite herself in marriage with his sovereign." Further on, he thus describes the condition of the Sudra: "As much as the Brahmin is an object of intense veneration, so much is the Sudra an object of contempt and even of abhorrence to the other classes of his countrymen. The business of the Sudras is servile labour, and their degradation inhuman. Not only is the most abject and grovelling submission imposed upon them as a religious duty,

kinds of labour, secured such an abundance of the more common and useful commodities as not only supplied their own wants, but ministered to those of the countries around them." Historical Description, &c., p. 180, 181.

but they are driven from their just and equal share in all the advantages of the social institution. The crimes which they commit against others are more severely punished, than those of any other delinquents, while the crimes which others commit against them are more gently punished than those against any other sufferers. Even their persons and labour are not free. A man of the servile caste, whether bought or unbought, a Brahmin may compel to perform servile duty; because such a man was created by the self-existent for the purpose of serving Brahmins. The law scarcely permits them to own property, for it is declared that no collection of wealth must be made by a Sudra, even though he has power, since a servile man, who has amassed riches, gives pain even to Brahmins. A Brahmin may seize, without hesitation, the goods of his Sudra slave; for as that slave can have no property, his master may take his goods. Any failure in the respect exacted of the Sudra towards the superior classes is avenged by the most dreadful punishments. Adultery with a woman of a higher caste is expiated by burning to death on a bed of iron. The degradation of the wretched Sudra extends not only to every thing in this life, but even to the sacred instruction, and his chance of favour with the superior powers. A Brahmin must never read the Veda in the presence of Sudras[3]."

Dr. Tenant, a writer who had resided in India, takes quite the same view of the subject. "The very structure and arrangement of society itself is in India formed by the religious system, which there interferes with every temporal as well spiritual concern of its professors. It thus lays in its very foundation the grand obstacle to every improvement of

[3] Mill's History of British India, vol. i. p. 162, 163, 167, 168.

the condition of the people. It has divided the whole community into four great classes, and stationed each class between certain walls of separation, which are impassable by the purest virtue, and by the most conspicuous merit."

The author of a History of British India, in the Asiatic Annual Register, likewise writes in the same strain. "The Hindoo people," says he, "have been divided from time out of memory into four distinct classes or orders, each of which possesses its separate immunities and appropriate laws, and none of which are permitted to intermarry or to have any further connexion with one another than the fellowship of custom and the communion of faith [4]."

In order to make this description of Indian society appear the less extraordinary and incredible, it has been attempted to be shown that a similar classification of the people existed among many other ancient nations. The Egyptians, whose religion and institutions certainly bore a considerable resemblance on various points to those of the Hindoos, are said to have been divided by some ancient legislator, into three, four, or seven castes, but the exact number is not known. At the head of these castes stood the priests, to whom, according to ancient authorities, one-third of the whole land of Egypt was assigned. Next followed the military caste, a more numerous body perhaps than the priests; and therefore, though they also possessed a third of the land, individually less wealthy. Then came the body of the people, the yeomanry and artisans, who, whether they consisted of one

[4] These two writers are quoted by Mr. Rickards, in his valuable work on India, in order to show into what extraordinary errors even able men, in spite of the advantage of experience, will sometimes fall, when they have unfortunately adopted a plausible system. India, or Facts submitted to illustrate the Character and Condition of the native Inhabitants, vol. i. p. 6—8.

class or were divided into many, were originally invested with the property of the remaining third of the land[5]. Around each of these castes a moral barrier was attempted to be created, impassable alike to industry, to genius, and to virtue. The son of an embalmer, the Chandala of Egypt, was condemned by the legislator to follow from generation to generation the abhorred profession of his father; to be regarded as an unclean being, as an *ogre* or a vampire, delighting in the touch of corpses, whom it was lawful first to employ and afterwards to stone in the streets. All other professions, it is said, were in like manner hereditary. Mr. Mill has cited a passage from Plato, in which it is pretended that the quadruple division of the people into castes prevailed in very ancient times among the Athenians[6]. But those times were indeed ancient, long before civilization had commenced in Egypt, or the great Atlantic island or continent had been overwhelmed by the ocean. The fancy is put by Plato into the mouth of a vain Egyptian priest, deriding the Greeks as a modern people, but at the same time inadvertently admitting that they were far more ancient than his own countrymen. The whole, however, is too much like a piece of pleasantry, or like a dream, seriously to assist us in our inquiries. Cecrops, it is said, afterwards effected the same division of the people among the Athe-

[5] Diod. Sicul. lib. i. p. 84; Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1135.—These three classes were again subdivided, as in India. Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 164.—Afterwards the king got possession of the people's portion of the land, but restored it on condition that he should receive a fifth of the produce. Genesis, chap. xlvii. ver. 18—20.—The priests, therefore, possessed a *third*, and the king a *fifth* of the whole kingdom. Goguet, Orig. des Loix, tom. i. p. 113.—Sesostris is said to have divided the land into equal portions, like Lycurgus. Id. tom. iii. p. 30; Aristot. Polit. lib. vii. cap. 10, (c. 9, ed. Schneider).

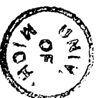
[6] Platon. Timæus, p. 24, A. ed. Steph.

nians[7]; though elsewhere this division is attributed to Erechtheus. The same classification, according to Professor Millar, prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons. The ancient Colchians and Iberians are supposed to have been classified; as well as the Persians, the Medes, and even the Peruvians: in short, those writers who are satisfied with very distant analogies find this institution everywhere. Mr. Mill supposes that the introduction of the institution of castes among the Arabs and Tartars would be a benefit; but he could not have sufficiently reflected upon the comparative conditions of those nations and the great body of the Hindoos, according to his own view of the matter. If he has painted correctly—to say nothing of Arab and Tatar—who would not rather be a savage than a Sudra? But if this classification of the people was actually effected among all those ancient nations as well as among the Hindoos, may we not infer that the result has everywhere been nearly the same? The Greeks, whatever were their institutions during their connexion with the people of Atlantis, had completely shaken off, by the time they arrived at the historical period, every trammel of caste. With respect to the Egyptians, the Medes, and the Persians of Jemshid, it must be candidly acknowledged that our acquaintance with them is too slight to admit of our predicating any thing with confidence concerning this part of their institutions. We are, therefore, after all compelled to contemplate the institutions of the Hindoos in themselves, with little or no light from any considerations of analogy. Neither Plato nor Aristotle can aid us. Our only guide through

[7] For this fact Goguet, tom. iii. p. 42, refers to Pollux, lib. viii. 109. But of what authority is Pollux in a matter of this kind?—Cecrops, we see, is not allowed to maintain peaceful possession of this honour, for Strabo brings in another claimant in Erechtheus.

Page 110. Sudra. Kshatriya. Vaisya. Brahmin.

Individuals of the four great Castes.



this obscure labyrinth must be no other than common sense; which, however, if we partially follow its footsteps, may be sufficient.

It is generally acknowledged that, at some remote period, an attempt was made, apparently by the Brahmins, to divide the people of India into four great castes; first, the *Brahmins*, or priests; second, the *Kshatriyas*, or soldiers; third, the *Vaisyas*, or merchants and husbandmen; and fourth, the *Sudras*, or artisans and labourers. This classification is attributed to Menu. But we are not to seek for its origin in the great *Dharma Sâstra*[8], or 'Institutes of Menu,' which are not even attributed to the lawgiver himself, but are said to be a compilation made

[8] The Hindoos, Sir William Jones remarks, firmly believe these laws to have been promulgated in the beginning of time by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma; or, in plain language, the first of created beings, and not the oldest only, but the holiest of legislators. Yet the Brahmins can give us no precise information respecting the age in which this holy man lived, or even of the era of the compilation of the Institutes attributed to him. The character of Bhrigu, and the whole dramatic arrangement of the work, are acknowledged to be fictitious. Nothing is known of the author of the Institutes, of the time when, or the place where they were composed; for the reasoning by which Sir William Jones attempts to prove them older than the laws of Solon and Lycurgus, and even to fix the year 880 B.C. as the period of their promulgation, appears to us wholly unsatisfactory. The same thing may be said of his endeavours to prove the Yajur-Veda more ancient than the Pentateuch. He does not actually assert, but seems clearly to have believed that *Menu* and *Minos* were one and the same person; or, at least, that the Cretan lawgiver adopted some of his institutions, which thus found their way at length to Sparta! The dreams of an able man may be entitled to some indulgence, but these whimsical filiations appear to us utterly groundless. However, the reader who desires to consider the arguments of Sir William Jones, may consult the preface to the Institutes, in his Works, vol. vii. p. 75—90; in Haughton's edition of Menu, vol. ii. p. xiii. &c.

by Bhrigu from the floating records of tradition. The four-fold division of the people took place anterior to the era of this compilation; and Colonel Tod argues with considerable force and ingenuity that the system of castes approached its perfection about one thousand four hundred years before Christ. Whatever progress the Hindoos have made in the sciences, or arts, or arms, must, he insists, have taken place before this epoch; for "it is difficult," says he, "to conceive how the arts and sciences could advance, when it is held impious to doubt the truth of whatever has been handed down, and still more to suppose that the degenerate could improve thereon. The highest ambition of the present learned priesthood, generation after generation, is to be able to comprehend what has thus reached them, and to form commentaries upon past wisdom; which commentaries are commented upon *ad infinitum.* Whoever dare now aspire to improve thereon, must keep the secret in his own breast. They are but the expounders of the olden oracles: were they more they would be infidels. But this could not always have been the case."

Previous to the period above stated it is abundantly clear that no impassable barrier between the several orders of society existed. "In the early ages of the Solar and Lunar dynasties," says the same writer, "the priestly office was not hereditary in families; it was a profession; and the genealogies exhibit frequent instances of branches of these races terminating their martial career in the commencement of a religious sect, or *gotra,* and of their descendants reassuming their warlike occupations. Thus of the ten sons of Icshwâcu, three are represented as abandoning worldly affairs and taking to religion, and one of these, Canin, is said to be the first who made an *agnihotra,* or pyreum, and worshipped fire, while

another son embraced commerce. Of the Lunar line and the six sons of Purûravas, the name of the fourth was Reh;" from him the fifteenth generation was Harita, who with his eight brothers took to the office of religion, and established the Causika Gotra, a tribe of Brahmins. "In the very early periods," (we again quote Colonel Tod,) "the princes of the Solar line, like the Egyptians and Romans, combined the offices of the priesthood with the kingly power, and this whether Brahminical or Buddhist. Many of the royal line, before and subsequent to Râma, passed great part of their lives as ascetics; and in ancient sculpture and drawings, the head is as often adorned with the braided lock of the ascetic, as with the diadem of royalty. The greatest monarchs bestowed their daughters on these royal hermits and sages. Ahalya, the daughter of the powerful Panchalica, became the wife of the ascetic Gotama. The sage Jamadagni espoused the daughter of Sahasra Arjuna, of Mahasvati, king of the Hihya tribe, a great branch of the Yadu race [9]."

But even if we assume, with Colonel Tod, that the system of castes had acquired something like consistency about fourteen hundred years before Christ, we shall be able to prove from the Dharma Sâstra itself that its rigid sway was not of long duration. The compiler of this work, whoever he was, speaking of a monarch named Vena, who apparently had lived many ages before his time, observes:—"He, possessing the whole earth, and thence only called the chief of sage monarchs, gave rise to a confusion of classes, when his intellect became weak through lust [10]." Now, according to Sir William Jones, the compilation of the Mânava Dharma Sâstra was made about eight hundred and eighty, or nine hundred

[9] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 26, 27, 29.
[10] Institutes of Menu, chap. ix. ver. 67.

years before Christ; suppose Vena to have preceded this period by two hundred years, and we shall find that the Utopia of Menu, or rather of the Brahmins, did not, at most, flourish in all its glory above three hundred years. In the age of Bhrigu, the corruption of mankind was hopeless. Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas, captivated by fortune or beauty, had descended to the embraces of Sudra wives, and from these unions had proceeded upwards of ninety mixed classes, whose actions and employments the legislator found it necessary to regulate. His abhorrence, however, for these children of unhallowed nuptials is strikingly visible in his naïve original language: "From a Brahmin on a wife of the Vaisya class," he observes, "is born a son called *Ambasht'ha* or *Vaidya*, on a Sudra wife a *Nishada*, named also *Parasava*: from a Kshatriya on a wife of the Sudra class, springs a creature called *Ugra* [11], with a nature partly warlike and partly servile, ferocious in his manners, cruel in his acts. The sons of a Brahmin by women of three lower classes, of a Kshatriya by women of two, and of a Vaisya by one lower class, are called *Apasadah*, or degraded below their fathers. From a Kshatriya, by a Brahmini wife, springs a *Suta* by birth; from a Vaisya, by a military or sacerdotal wife, spring a *Magadha*, and a *Vaideha*. From a Sudra on women of the commercial, military, or priestly classes, are born sons of a mixed breed, called *Ayogava*, *Kshattri*, and *Chandala*, the lowest of mortals [12]." Having acknowledged the existence of these mixed castes, he proceeds to appropriate to each the occupation which he considered most suitable to its nature. "A *Dasyu*, or outcast of any

[11] Hence, perhaps, may have been derived the word *ogre*. The description suits exactly the vulgar ideas attached to that kind of monster.

[12] Institutes of Menu, chap. x. ver. 8—12.

pure class, begets on an *Ayogavi* woman a *Sairindhra*, who should know how to attend and to dress his master; though not a slave, he must live by slavish work, and may also gain subsistence by catching wild beasts in toils. A *Vaideha* begets on her a sweet-voiced *Maitreyaca*, who, ringing a bell at the appearance of dawn, continually praises great men. A *Nishada* begets on her a *Margava* or *Dasa*, who subsists by his labour in boats, and is named *Caiverta* by those who dwell in Aryavarta, or the land of the venerable. Those three of a base tribe are severally begotten on *Ayogavi* women, who wear the clothes of the deceased, and eat reprehensible food[13]." Other mixed classes are differently disposed of: one is condemned to live without the town; another is to work with cane and reeds; a third is to act as jailor; and a fourth is to earn his livelihood by punishing criminals condemned by the king. "This last," Menu observes, "is a sinful wretch ever despised by the virtuous." Some classes are degraded to wait on women, or slay wild beasts; while another caste called *Ugra* are condemned to the unaccountable species of degradation of "killing or confining such animals as live in holes[14]."

Such was the state of the system of castes about nine hundred years before Christ. It was found incompatible with the necessary movements of society, and, without being formally set aside, had grown to be openly neglected in a very remarkable degree. Still, the influence of the Brahmins, backed by the terrors of superstition and the force of habit, sufficed to embitter the destiny of those mixed classes whose existence they were unable to prevent. These arrogant priests had, it seems, contrived some way or

[13] Institutes, &c. chap. x. ver. 32—35.
[14] Idem, chap. x. ver. 49.

another to raise a belief that a great degree of moral turpitude was attached to the intermarriage of the different orders of society[15]. Some obscure persuasion of a similar kind existed among the old patricians of Rome, who would seem seriously to have

[15] In the consulship of Marcus Genucius and Caius Curtius, A. R. 310, when Caius Canuleius, a tribune of the people, proposed a law for allowing the intermarriage of patricians and plebeians, which the former, says Livy, considered as tending *to contaminate their blood, and to confound all the distinctions and privileges of noble birth*, the consuls had the insolent temerity to advance in the senate-house that the project of Canuleius tended to nothing less "than the prostitution of the privileges of nobility, and the confounding of the rights of auspices both public and private, that nothing might be left *pure* and *unpolluted;* and that, every distinction being removed, no person might know what himself was, or to what order he belonged. For what other tendency had such *promiscuous intermarriages*, than to produce an irregular intercourse between patricians and plebeians, not very different from that between brutes. So that of their offspring not one should be able to tell of what blood he was, or in what mode he was to worship the gods, being himself a heterogeneous composition, half-patrician and half plebeian." Livy, lib. iv. cap. 2. Again, on the proposition of Sextius and Licinius to elect consuls and five decemvirs for superintending religious matters from among the plebeians, Appius Claudius Crassus exclaims: "But what shall I say with respect to religion, and the auspices; the affront and injury offered to which reflect immediately on the immortal gods?" "Does not he, in effect, abolish the auspices, who, by creating plebeian consuls, takes them out of the hands of the patricians, the only persons capable of holding them? They may now mock at religion, and say, where is the great matter if the chickens do not feed? If they come out too slowly from the coop? If a bird chaunt an ominous note? . . . Let, therefore, pontiffs, augurs, kings of the sacrifices, be chosen at random. Let us place the tiara of Jupiter's flamen on any one that offers, provided he be a man." Id. lib. vi. cap. 41; see also lib. vii. cap. 6, and lib. iv. cap. 6.—Niebuhr remarks that, at the period referred to by Livy, the Romans consisted of *two different nations*, united in one city (Roman History, vol. ii. p. 47), and justifies the expression by a citation from Dionysius, who calls the different orders "nations." Lib. x. cap. 60.

imagined that the union of one of their class with the plebeian might be offensive to Jupiter.

But, be this as it may, the tribes arising from the intermarriage of the castes have by the Brahmins always been regarded as impure, and placed without the pale of society; which at first threw upon the condition of an outcast an air of terrible isolation, as if those who were thus excluded from the social system had been stricken with a moral leprosy; but as the number of the impure tribes increased, and formed in themselves a numerous community, they began to compare the bulk of their own body with that of the one from which they had been driven, and the feeling of isolation died away. A kind of public opinion was created among themselves; the consciousness of wrong and injustice imparted a degree of dignity to the hatred with which they repaid the scorn of the Brahmins; and during the long ages of bloodshed and anarchy through which India has descended to her present degradation, occasions were not wanting to the oppressed, nor did they fail to profit by them, of avenging on their tyrants the ignominy and misery of their race. However, the extent to which the contempt of the Brahmins formerly affected the condition of the mixed tribes is not exactly known. It is certain they were not, in all cases, deprived of the benefits of education; for Vyasa, the principal editor of the Vedas, and Valmiki, the great epic poet of India, belonged to these impure castes, though invested with a sacred character by Hindoo legends[16].

Of all these impure tribes the most numerous and the best known is that of the *Pariahs*, a word formed by corruption from *Parriar*, the Tamul appellation of these outcasts. According to the calculation of the Abbé Dubois, the Pariahs constitute one-fifth of

16 Colonel Tod, Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 29.

the whole population of India, and consequently fall very little short of thirty millions,—a number nearly equal to that of the entire population of France[17]. Like the other subordinate tribes, they are subdivided into several classes, among which, notwithstanding the contempt in which they are all equally held by the other Hindoos, there is a constant struggle for superiority. But the disdain of the superior castes for the Pariah is regulated by geographical position. "It prevails chiefly in the southern parts of the Peninsula," says Dubois, "and becomes less apparent in the north. In that quarter of the Mysore, where I am now writing these pages, the higher classes endure the approach of the Pariahs, for they suffer them to enter that part of the house which shelters the cows, and in some cases they have been permitted *to show their head and one foot in the apartment of the master of the house.* I have been informed that the whole distinction between these castes becomes less apparent as you go northward, till at last it almost totally disappears.—In theory, the Brahmin considers the air of a whole neighbourhood polluted by the approach of a Pariah, who is, therefore, prohibited from entering the street in which the Brahmins reside, and if they venture to transgress, those superior beings would have the right, not to assault them themselves, because it would be a pollution to touch them even with the end of a long pole, but they would be entitled to give them a sound beating by the hands of others, or even to make an end of them, which has often happened by the orders of the native princes, without dispute or inquiry. He who has been touched, even without being conscious of it, by a Pariah, is defiled, and cannot be purified from the stain, or communicate with any individual,

[17] Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 454.

without undergoing a variety of ceremonies more or less difficult, according to the rank of the individual and the custom of the caste to which he belongs[18]."

The conjectures of Dubois on the origin of the Pariah tribe are so remarkable for prejudice that they would appear to have been dictated by a Brahmin. "It is more than probable," says he, "that this despised tribe was originally created by the union of individuals of all castes, who were expelled for *bad conduct and transgressions of the rules of their order.*" "They would naturally be led to give themselves up to every excess without restraint. In that abandoned course of life they still continue." From all this, what should we naturally infer, but that the motives for which men are usually expelled from their caste, must be most heinous and atrocious in their nature? We will take the Abbé's own description of them. "Exclusion from caste is frequently put in force without much ceremony, sometimes even out of hatred or caprice. These cases happen when individuals, from whatever motives, refuse in the whole, or for the greater part, to assist at the marriages or funerals of any one of their relations or friends, or to invite on such occasions of their own, those that have a right to be present. Persons excluded in this way never fail to commence proceedings against those who have offered them the insult, demanding reparation for their wounded honour. Such instances are commonly terminated by arbitration." He then adds, by way of illustration, "It is not necessary that offences against the usages of caste should be either intentional or of great magnitude. It happened, to my knowledge, not along ago, that some Brahmins who live in my neighbourhood, having been convicted of eating at a

[18] Description, &c. p. 455, 456. Dr. Francis Buchanan's Journey through Mysore, vol. ii. p. 493.

public entertainment with a Sudra, *disguised as a Brahmin*, were all ejected from the caste, and did not regain admission into it without undergoing an infinite number of ceremonies both troublesome and expensive[19]."

It does not necessarily follow, therefore, that the ancestors of the Pariahs were an immoral or abandoned set of men. Under some frivolous pretence or another they were expelled from their caste, and they may have been prevented, in some cases by poverty, in others by wounded pride, from undergoing the humiliating ceremonies attending a readmission. Their present condition and employment are thus described by Dubois. "But, if the caste of the Pariahs be held in low and vile repute, it must be admitted that it deserves to be so, by the conduct of the individuals and the sort of life which they lead. The most of them sell themselves, with their wives and children, for slaves to the farmers, who make them undergo the hardest labours of agriculture, and treat them with the utmost severity. They are likewise the scavengers of the villages, their business being to keep the thoroughfares clean, and to remove all the filth as it collects in the houses. Yet these, notwithstanding the meanness of their employment, are generally better treated than the others, because there is superadded to the disgusting employment we have mentioned, the cleanlier duty of distributing the waters of the tanks and canals, for irrigating the rice plantations of the inhabitants of the village, who, for that reason, cannot avoid feeling some kindness in their behalf. Some of them, who do not live in this state of servitude, are employed to take care of the horses of individuals, or of the army, or of elephants and oxen. They are also the porters, and run upon errands and messages. In some parts

19 Description of the Manners, &c. p. 25. Compare Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 306.

they are permitted to cultivate the lands for their own benefit, and in others they can exercise the profession of weavers. Of late they have occasionally been admitted into the European armies and those of the native princes, in which they have sometimes attained considerable distinction. In point of courage they are not inferior to any other Hindoo caste, but the education they receive deprives them of all the other qualities of a soldier[20]."

Inferior even to the Pariahs are certain obscure castes which are found in various parts of India. Such are, for example, the *Pallis*, in the kingdom of Madura, and the *Pulias*, who inhabit the forests and mountainous districts of the Malabar coast. These wild people, who are by the natives esteemed inferior to the beasts of prey, which roam through and share the dominion of their forests, are not even permitted to erect for themselves houses. A shed supported on four bamboos, and open on all sides, shelters them from the rain, but not from the inclemency of the weather. They dare not venture upon the public road, lest their steps should defile it; and when they perceive any person approaching them from a distance, they are commanded to utter a yell or loud cry, like a noxious beast, and make a wide circuit to let him pass[21].

Besides these there are various wild wandering tribes, who are regarded with abhorrence by the Hindoos. Among the most remarkable of these migratory hordes are the *Curumeru*[22], who are divided into three branches. "The first is chiefly engaged," says Dubois, "in the traffic of salt, to procure which they go in bands to the coast, and carry it to the

20 Description of the Manners, &c. p. 458.
21 See Buchanan's Journey through Mysore, vol. ii. p. 272.
22 Buchanan calls them *Curubaru*. Journey through Mysore, vol. i. p. 395, &c.

interior of the country on the backs of asses, which they have in great droves; and when they have disposed of their cargoes, they reload the beasts with the sort of grain in greatest request upon the coast, to which they return without loss of time. Thus their whole lives are passed in transit, without a place of settlement in any part of the land.

"The trade of another branch of the Curumeru is the manufacture of osier panniers, wicker baskets, and other household utensils of that sort, or bamboo mats. This class, like the preceding, are compelled to traverse the whole country from place to place in quest of employment. All of them live under little tents, constructed of woven bamboos, three feet high, four or five broad, and five or six in length, in which they squat, man, wife, and children, and shelter themselves from the weather. When they find no more work in the district, they fold up their tents, and remove to the next population.

"These vagabonds never think of saving anything for future wants, but spend every day all they earn, and sometimes more. They must therefore live in grievous poverty, and when their work fails them, they have no resource but begging alms.

"The third species of Curumeru is generally known under the name of *Calla-bantru*, or 'Robbers,' and indeed those who compose this caste are generally thieves or sharpers by profession and right of birth. The distinction of expertness in filching belongs to this tribe, the individuals of which it consists having been trained to knavery from their infancy. They are instructed in no other learning, and the only art they communicate to their children is that of stealing adroitly, unless we except that of being prepared with a round lie[23], and with a de-

[23] This, however, is an accomplishment in which the Calla-bantru by no means enjoy a monopoly. Even the Brahmins

termined resolution to endure every sort of torture rather than to confess the robberies which are laid to their charge.

"Far from being ashamed of their infamous profession, they openly glory in it; and when they have nothing to fear they publicly boast with the greatest self complacency of the dexterous robberies they have committed at various times during their career. Some who have been caught and wounded in the act, or who have had their nose and ears, or perhaps their hand cut off for the offence, exhibit their loss with ostentation, as a mark of their intrepidity, and these are the men who are generally chosen to be the chiefs of their caste.

"It is commonly in the dead of the night that they commit their depredations. Then they enter the villages silently, leaving sentinels at the avenues, while others seek out the houses that may be attacked with the least danger of detection, and so make good their entry and pillage them. This they effect without attempting to force open the door, which would be a noisy operation, but by quietly cutting through the mud wall with a sharp instrument, so as to make an opening sufficiently large to pass through. The Calla-bantru are so expert in this species of robbery, that in less than half an hour they will carry off a rich lading of plunder without

condescend, occasionally, to wield the same kind of weapon. "When the Brahmins find themselves involved in troubles, there is no falsehood or perjury which they will not employ for the purpose of extricating themselves. Nor is this to be wondered at, *since they are not ashamed to declare openly that untruth and false swearing are virtuous and meritorious deeds when they tend to their own advantage*. When such horrible morality is taught by the theologians of India, is it to be wondered at that falsehood should be so predominant among the people?" Dubois, Description, &c. p. 107.

being heard or suspected till daylight discloses the villany[24]."

These Calla-bantru, however, are far from being vulgar thieves. In the Musulman kingdoms of India, they are authorized by the government, which grants them a licence in consideration of receiving half the booty. Still, as this contract must be kept secret, they are compelled when caught to submit without redress to the wounds and mutilations inflicted by the magistrate, who is compelled, however, to shield from punishment the rogues with whom he happens to be in partnership. "The princes have always in their service a great number of Calla-bantru, whom they employ in their calling, which is that of plundering for their master's profit. The last Musulman prince who reigned in the Mysore had a regular battalion of them on service in time of war, not for the purpose of fighting in the field, but to prowl and infest the enemy's camp in the night, stealing away the horses and other necessaries of the officers, spiking the cannon, and acting as spies. They were rewarded in proportion to the dexterity they displayed in their achievements; and in time of peace they were despatched into the various states of neighbouring princes, to rob for the benefit of their master, besides discharging their ordinary duty of spies[25]."

But of all the vagrant castes, the *Lambadis*, supposed to be of Mahratta descent, are the most dreaded. In time of peace they subsist by dealing in corn, but when war breaks out, they hurry, like eagles, to the scene of carnage, and hiring their numerous herds of bullocks to the army, scatter themselves over the country, which they deliver up

[24] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 465, 466.
[25] Idem, p. 466.

to indiscriminate plunder. Their women have the reputation of superior lasciviousness, even in a country where wantonness is inherent in the national character. Another wandering tribe is that of the *Dumbaru*, or serpent-charmers, who are numerous. That of the *Pakanaty*, who, about one hundred and fifty years ago, were driven from society by oppression, and led to adopt their present vagrant habits, which they will probably never again abandon, are a peaceful and innocent race found in the Mysore and Telinga country. In the hilly districts near Coimbatore there is another singular tribe whose habits and manners are thus described by Dr. Buchanan. "They are said to have neither house nor cultivation, but catch birds and game, part of which they sell for rice. One common article of their food is the white ant, or termes. They travel about from place to place, conveying their baggage and children on asses. Every man has also a cow, constructed like a stalking horse, by means of which he approaches his game, and shoots it with arrows. The *Chensu Carir*, who preserve their native manners, and never come among the villages, are said to speak an unintelligible jargon, and have no clothing but the leaves of trees. Those who occasionally wander about in the cultivated country understand many Telinga words, and wear a small slip of cloth to cover their nakedness. Others live in little huts near the villages, and have a small piece of blanket or cotton cloth to cover their nakedness. They are reconciled to the other natives, and pay a trifling capitation tax to the government. Where the woods are more extensive they are terrified at the sight of any civilized being, and live absolutely without any clothing, but cover their nakedness with a few leaves. In these forests they dwell in caves or under bushes, which they make a better shelter from the weather by adding small

branches from other trees. When the civilized part of this tribe go into the woods to visit their relations, or to trade with them, they must throw off their rags, lest they should be mistaken for a villager, in which case none of the *Chensu* would approach."

"The language of the *Chensu* is a dialect of the Tamul, with occasionally a few Carnata or Telinga words intermixed; but their accent is so different from that of Madras, that my servants did not at first understand what they said. Their original country, they say, is the Animalya forest below the Ghâts, which is confirmed by their dialect. Those who live in the villages have taken the *Pancham Banijigaru* as their chiefs; they trade chiefly with them, and call them their *Swamis* or lords; but although they have learned to invoke the name of Siva, they do not wear the lingam. Those in the woods have either no religion, or some simple one with which those here are unacquainted. The people of this country attribute to the *Chensu* the power of bewitching tigers; and my Brahmin gravely informed me that the *Chensu* women, when they went out to procure food, left their infants in charge of one of these ferocious beasts. The *Chensu* of course deny their possessing any such power, but allege that the art is known to another rude tribe named *Soligaru*, who inhabit the southern Ghauts, which separate this country from Coimbatore. The *Chensu* here live upon game, wild roots, herbs and fruits, and a little grain, which they purchase from the farmers. They are enabled to do this by collecting some drugs, honey, and wax. It is on account of their having the exclusive privilege of collecting these two last articles, that they pay a poll-tax, which is annually fifteen *fanams*, or 10*s*. 0¼*d*. for each family[26]."

From the above account some idea may be formed

[26] Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 7, 167, 168.

of the variety of materials which go to the making up of Hindoo society. The barriers of caste, we see, have in numerous instances been thrown down; intermarriages have taken place; and a mixed multitude has been created, which cannot be said to form a portion of any caste. But in reality the legislators of India never contemplated the placing of an impassable barrier between the various orders of society, their only object being to secure supremacy to the Brahmins. By the Institutes of Menu, the priest is authorized to select his wife from either of the three superior castes; the Kshatriya, also, has the liberty to choose from the Vaisya and Sudra castes, in addition to his own; the Vaisya, more limited than his superiors, can only carry his views over his own and the Sudra castes; but the Sudra's affections are not permitted to range beyond[27] his tribe. However, if any man vehemently desire to indulge his passions with a greater latitude, he has at hand the following texts for his justification. "A believer in scripture may receive pure knowledge even from a Sudra; a lesson of the highest virtue even from a Chandala; and a woman bright as a gem even from the basest family. Even from poison may nectar be taken; even from a child, gentleness of speech; even from a foe, prudent conduct; and even from an impure substance, gold. From every quarter, therefore, must be selected women bright as gems; knowledge, virtue, purity, gentle speech, and various liberal arts[28]." And to show that these unions were not matters of speculation, the law-giver describes the ceremonies which are to take place on

[27] "A Sudra woman only must be the wife of a Sudra; she and a Vaisyâ of a Vaisya; those two and a Kshatriyâ of a Kshatriya; those two and a Brahminî of a Brahmin." Institutes of Menu, chap. iii. ver. 13.

[28] Institutes of Menu, chap. ii. ver. 238—240.

the occasion of such marriages. "By a Kshatriya woman, on her marriage with a Brahmin, an arrow must be held in her hand; by a Vaisya woman with a bridegroom of the sacerdotal or military class, a whip; and by a Sudra bride, marrying a priest, a soldier, or a merchant, must be held the skirt of a mantle[29]." Nor are these women of low caste regarded, after marriage, as any way inferior to their husbands. "Whatever be the qualities of the man with whom a woman is united by lawful marriage, such qualities even she assumes, like a river united with the sea. Acshamala, a woman of the lowest birth, being thus united to Vasisht'ha, and Sarangi being united to Mandapala, were entitled to very high honour. These and other females of low birth have attained eminence in this world by the respective good qualities of their lords[30]." When a man happens, however, to have many wives, a difference is made in the distribution of the inheritance among the children. "The son of a Brahmin, or Kshatriya, or a Vaisya by a woman of the servile class, shall inherit no part of the estate, unless he be virtuous, nor jointly with other sons unless his mother was lawfully married: whatever his father may give him, let that be his own[31]." So much for the intermarriage of the different castes as authorized by law. Whether or not the mass of the people were likely to be more rigid on such points than their legislators, may be conjectured from the existence of the *Varna-Sankara*[32], or that multitude of mixed castes whose existence has already been proved.

[29] Institutes of Menu, chap. iii. ver. 44.

[30] Idem, chap. ix. ver. 22—24.

[31] Idem, chap. ix. ver. 155; Colebrooke's Two Treatises on the Hindu Law of Inheritance, p. 142, &c.

[32] "During this time of universal impiety and sin," says Mr. Rickards, alluding to the reign of *Vena*, "an intermixture of the tribes took place; and from intermarriages, and illegal con-

The next point to be considered is the strictly hereditary nature of all trades and professions in India, which Robertson, assuming the fact of its existence, unphilosophically considers favourable to the improvement of the arts. Inferior writers, yielding to the instinct of imitation, have unceasingly repeated the assertions of Robertson; and therefore the fact, I suppose, is generally taken for granted. The question, however, may yet be subjected to another examination. By the Institutes of Menu, the Brahmin, unable to subsist by the performance of his professional duties, is permitted to become a soldier. The compiler of this ancient code appears to experience no "compunctious visitings of nature" at thus putting the sword in the hand of the priest for the destruction of his fellow-creatures; but when, having placed before him the profession of a merchant, as a resource, should he fail in war, he comes to enumerate the other modes by which, in case of necessity, the Brahmin may subsist, he suddenly affects a tone of humanity, and observes, "A Brahmin and a Kshatriya, obliged to subsist by the acts of a Vaisya, must avoid with care, if they can live by keeping herds, the business of tillage, which gives great pain to *sentient creatures*, and is dependant upon the labours of others, as bulls and so forth. Some are of opinion that agriculture is excellent; but it is a mode of subsistence which the benevolent greatly blame, for the iron-mouthed pieces of wood not only wound the earth, but the creatures dwelling in it[33]." However, there are modes of

nexions, of the four principal tribes, arose a host of mixed tribes, under the general denomination of *Burrun-Sunker*." India, &c. p. 15, 16. The word *Burrun-Sunker* is the modern vernacular corruption of the Sanscrit *Varna-sankara*, i. e. "Mixture or confusion of castes."

[33] Institutes of Menu, chap. x. ver. 83, 84.

earning a livelihood still more objectionable than wounding the earth, and giving pain to sentient creatures, to which the hapless Brahmin may resort under the guidance of hunger; among other things the business of a petty dealer is open to him. Cattle-dealing and the slave-trade are prohibited. In like manner the Kshatriya and the Vaisya, urging the plea of necessity, are permitted to quit the calling of their forefathers, and to descend to the professions of those beneath them, with the loose caution that they are not "to do what ought never to be done." Even the Sudra, when employment in the service of the "twice born[34]" is not to be obtained, may subsist by handicrafts, or become a painter or copyist[35].

But the authority of the Institutes of Menu has at present little weight on many points in India. The doctrines of the *Jatimala*, or "Garland of Classes," an extract from the *Rudra Yamala Tantra*, correspond better, on the subject of castes, with usage and the received opinions; and according to this work almost every profession is open to every man. "A Brahmin, unable to subsist by his duties, may live by the duty of a soldier: if he cannot get a subsistence by either of these employments, he may apply to tillage, and attendance on cattle, or gain a competence by traffic, avoiding certain commodities. A Kshatriya in distress may subsist by all these means; but he must not have recourse to the highest functions. In seasons of distress a further latitude is given. The practice of medicine and other learned professions, painting and other arts, work for wages, menial service, alms, and usury are among the modes of subsistence allowed to the Brah-

[34] So the three upper castes are called, the investiture with the sacred cord to the duties and rights of their respective orders being considered as a second birth.

[35] Institutes of Menu, chap. x. ver. 98—100.

min and Kshatriya. A Vaisya, unable to subsist by his own duties, may descend to the servile acts of a Sudra; and a Sudra, not finding employment by waiting on men of the higher classes, may subsist by handicrafts, principally following those mechanical occupations, as joinery and masonry; and practical arts, as painting and writing, by following which he may serve men of superior classes; and although a man of a lower class is, in general, restricted from the acts of a higher class, the Sudra is expressly permitted to become a trader or a husbandman. Besides the particular occupations assigned to each of the mixed classes, they have the alternative of following that profession which regularly belongs to the class from which they derive their origin on the mother's side: those at least have such an option, who are born in the direct order of the classes, as the *Mûrdhâbhishicta*, *Ambasht'ha*, and others. The mixed classes are also permitted to subsist by any of the duties of a Sudra; that is, by menial service, by handicrafts, by commerce, or by agriculture. Hence it appears that almost every occupation, though regularly it be the profession of a particular class, is open to most other classes, and that the limitations, far from being rigorous, do in fact reserve only one peculiar profession, that of the Brahmin, which consists in teaching the Veda, and officiating at religious ceremonies[36]. The same author adds, that the different classes now existing in Hindoostan are sufficiently numerous, but that "the subdivisions of classes have further multiplied distinctions to an endless variety." That mingling and confounding of the classes, therefore, which, according to Robertson, "would be regarded as an act of the most daring impiety," has, we find, taken place; and must, we will add, proceed to still greater lengths, before society in India can

[36] Colebrooke, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. v. 63, 64.

be said to stand at its natural level. With respect to the invasion of the priestly functions by persons of inferior castes, this also happens, and appears always to have happened, among the Hindoos. In the Institutes of Menu we find it observed that "Viswamitra, the son of Gadhi, acquired the rank of a priest, though born in the military class[37]." In modern times the honours of the priesthood are shared even by the Sudras. "Each caste and sect," says Dubois, "has its particular *Guru*, (or spiritual guide and religious preceptor). But all of them are not invested with an equal degree of authority. There is a gradation among the Gurus themselves, according to the dignity of the castes they belong to, and a kind of hierarchy has grown up among them, which preserves the subordination of one to another. In short there is an inferior clergy, very numerous in every quarter, while each sect has its particular high priests, who are but few in number. The inferior Gurus pay them obedience, and derive their power from the superior authority of the priests, who can depose them at pleasure, and appoint others in their room." The author proceeds to observe that in the sects of Vishnu and Siva, the higher and lower clergy are innumerable; and that each subdivision of the two sects has its pontiff and corresponding Gurus, or priests. He then adds:—"In the sect of Siva, also, each subdivision has its *Singhâsana*, or episcopal seat, and its *Pît'ha*, or places of residence of the inferior clergy. The Gurus of this sect are known by the names of *Pandahram Jangamas*, and others, according to the different idioms of the places.

[37] Institutes of Menu, chap. vii. ver. 42. The Karnata Brahmins refuse to officiate as *pujaris*, or priests, for the Pariahs, who, in consequence, select from among themselves a kind of priests, whom they name *velluan*. Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 20; Dubois, p. 461.

The pontiffs, and all the clergy of the sect of Siva, are taken out of the tribe of Sudra; but the greater part of the high Gurus of Vishnu are Brahmins who ordain the inferior clergy pertaining to the sect[38]." From a subsequent remark of the same author, it may clearly be inferred that the study of the Vedas is now permitted to Sudras; for he informs us, first, that a large proportion of the priests are Sudras; secondly, that it is the duty of the priests to employ a part of their time in the study of the *sacred writings* (i. e. the Vedas); therefore the Vedas are now placed in the hands of Sudras[39]. But not only are men of the servile class allowed to participate in the honours of this sacred calling, women also, among both Sivaïtes and Vishnuites, have established themselves in the sanctuary, to the great scandal, no doubt, of the rigid Brahmins. "In the sects of Siva and Vishnu, they admit a kind of priestesses, or women specially ordained to the service of their deities. They are different from the dancing women of the temples, but they follow the same infamous course of life with them. For the priestesses of Siva and of Vishnu, after being consecrated, become common to their sect, under the name of spouses to their divinities[40]." This fact is confirmed by the testimony of Colonel Tod, who observes that "it is not uncommon for priestesses to officiate in the temple of Siva." Speaking of the priests of Eklinga, who make profession of celibacy, and are called Gosains, or Goswami, this

[38] "After discharging all the duties which their profession requires of them towards their disciples, and performing their daily sacrifices and ablutions, the Gurus are bound by the rules of their order to employ what remains of their time in meditation, and *the study of the sacred writings*." Dubois, p. 71.

[39] Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 65, 66.

[40] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 71, 72.

author remarks that both Brahmins and Rajpoots, and even Goojers, can belong to this order[41]. Notwithstanding the institution of castes, by which, in the outset, the Sudra was condemned to servile or mean occupations, time and chance have operated on the Hindoos, both high and low, as upon all other men. The Sudra, growing rich and powerful in spite of laws which were too absurd to be observed, has in various parts of India arrived at sovereign power[42]. Among the ancient races of kings who reigned at Delhi, a dynasty of Sudra princes is enumerated. And, in fact, during the decline of the Hindoo power, many Sudra kings reigned in Hindoostan, whose descendants appear to have preserved, amidst all the shocks which their country has undergone, the diadems, though shorn of their splendour, which were won by the virtue or courage of their ancestors. "A real Kshatriya prince," says an author whose testimony is of considerable weight, "is not to be found in these days; all the greater princes of India, excepting the Paishwa, a Brahmin, are base born[43]." But if the Sudras have thus risen to rank and distinction, their priestly legislators have, in many, if not in most instances, sunk in the same proportion. The Brahmins, who pretend that the caste of Kshatriyas had become nearly extinct even before the period of the Musulman invasion, assert that the Rajpoots are merely a superior class of Sudras. If this be the

[41] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 517.

[42] This extraordinary circumstance had taken place even so early as the compilation of the Institutes of Menu. "Let him (a Brahmin) not dwell in a city governed by a Sudra king;" says the lawgiver, chap. iv. ver. 61. Perhaps the thing was not at that time uncommon, any more than at present; but we call it *extraordinary* in reference to the opinions generally entertained.

[43] Rickards, India, &c. vol. i. p. 29.

case, it only the more strongly proves the degradation of their own condition, for they are now and have for ages been employed by the princes of Mewar, in the capacities of butler, keeper of the wardrobe, or seneschal, besides the Guru, or domestic chaplain, who, to the duty of ghostly comforter, sometimes joins that of astrologer and physician, in which case "God help the prince[44]!" The armies of Mewar have frequently been recruited by the monastic warriors called Gosain, who abound in Rajpootana, and consist in great part of Brahmins. In fact, "Hindoostan abounds with Brahmins who make excellent soldiers, as far as bravery is a virtue; but our officers are cautious from experience of admitting too many into a troop or company, for they still retain their intriguing habits. I have seen nearly as many of the Brahmins as of military in some companies; a dangerous error[45]." Many Brahmins, who still continue to exercise the priestly profession, pretend to despise their lay brethren; but as the latter are often the more wealthy, they return with interest the contempt of the priests, and regard them as low persons. They do not, however, by any means confine themselves to the more genteel professions, but condescend to the cultivation of the earth, in which they employ Pariahs[46], and to almost every other trade and calling; and this too in a country where the Rajahs are of the servile class. To complete the humiliation of these proud children of Brahma, we find them driven by poverty and hunger, to take refuge, as cooks, in the kitchens of Sudras! "This I find is not only the case as it respects the Vaisyas, but rich Sudras of every order employ Brahmins as cooks; even the

[44] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 511, 512.

[45] Idem, vol. i. p. 28, note.

[46] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. ii. p. 19, 47, vol. iii. p. 5, 10; Ward, vol. i. p. 85, 87.

vairagi mendicants procure Brahmins to prepare the food at their feasts[47]."

From all that has been said it would appear that the ideas commonly entertained of the institutions of the Hindoos are highly erroneous. It is true that having the Institutes of Menu before them, several able writers have, in many cases, described with sufficient accuracy, the usages, customs, and manners which these laws were designed to create. But these writers do not, in general, appear to have reflected upon the difference that must inevitably exist between an Utopian system, like that of Menu or Draco, which, from the moment of its promulgation, was found to be almost wholly visionary and impracticable, and those real institutions and manners established by time and circumstance; which is, however, so great and striking, and exhibits itself in so many particulars, that those who form their picture of Hindoo society according to the ancient laws, in many respects obsolete, must necessarily misrepresent and distort it. What, in fact, does it signify that Menu, or rather the compiler of the code handed down to us under his name, devoted the Sudra to contempt and the Brahmin to honour, when, practically, we often find the Sudra a prince, and the Brahmin a beggar, subsisting upon the bounty of the former, fighting as a common soldier in his armies, and in many cases exercising the menial office of cook in his kitchen? Of expulsion from caste little need be said in this place: it is put in practice for trifling causes, and is reversed with more or less difficulty, according to circumstances. The rigorous old system is falling into decay, and perhaps approaching its end. "Let us rejoice," says Ward, "that the rust of those fetters has nearly eaten them

[47] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 95, note.

through; there are indications in the present state of Hindoo society, which evince that on account of the number of transgressors these barbarous laws cannot be much longer enforced. The social impulse is evidently felt as strongly by the Hindoos as by other nations; and this leads those who have formed friendships in the same neighbourhood to join in offering mutual pledges of hospitality; hence, in numerous instances, we find that groups of Hindoos of different castes actually meet in secret to *eat* and *smoke* together, rejoicing in this opportunity of indulging their social feelings. There is a strong propensity in human nature to pass the bounds prescribed by partial and short-sighted legislators: and in these private meetings the parties enjoy a kind of triumph in having leaped the fence and in being able to do it repeatedly with impunity. Early marriages being necessarily acts of compulsion, and against nature, it too frequently happens that the affections instead of fixing upon the law-given wife, become placed upon some one not of the same caste, who is preferred as the darling object of uncontrolled choice: here again the caste is sacrificed and detested in secret. The love of proscribed food in many instances becomes a temptation to trespass against the laws of caste: many Hindoos of the highest as well as of the lowest rank eat flesh, and other forbidden food, and should detection follow, the offenders avail themselves of the plea, "these are the remains of offerings presented to my guardian deity." The yoke of the caste becomes still more intolerable through the boundless licence which a Hindoo gives to his sensual desires; and these temptations to promiscuous intercourse with all castes of females are greatly strengthened by absence from home for months and years together, which is the case with thousands, especially in Calcutta and other large towns, as well

as throughout the native army: hence cohabiting, eating, and smoking with women of other castes is so common, that it is generally connived at, especially as it is generally done at a distance from the offender's relations. The very minuteness and intricacy of the rules connected with caste also tend powerfully to induce a forfeiture of the privileges it bestows: social intercourse among Hindoos is always through a path of thorns. Caste is destroyed by teaching religious rules to persons of inferior rank, by eating, or by intimate friendship with such persons, by following certain trades, by forbidden matrimonial alliances, by neglecting the customs of the caste, by the faults of near relations, &c. &c. And, where the caste is not forfeited, in many cases persons are tormented and persecuted to the greatest excess. From hence it will appear, that an institution the rules of which are at war with every passion of the human mind, good as well as evil, must sooner or later, especially if the government itself ceases to enforce these rules, fall into utter disuse and contempt. The present state of Hindoo society respecting the caste will therefore cease to be a matter of wonder. No one will be surprised to hear, that although the Hindoos give one another credit, as a matter of convenience, for being in possession of caste, and though there may be an outward and in the higher orders an insolent show of reverence for its rules; if the matter were to be searched into, and the laws of the caste were allowed to decide, *scarcely a single family of Hindoos would be found in the whole of Bengal whose caste is not forfeited:* this is well known, and generally acknowledged[48]."

[48] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. xv.—xvii.—A sagacious writer in the Edinburgh Review long suspected that the ideas of ordinary compilers and travellers on the subject of caste were highly erroneous. "The artificial

and unnatural division of a people into distinct classes is perhaps the most effectual method that could have been devised by the ingenuity of man, to check their improvement and repress their industry. Indeed, the natural operation of such an institution is so diametrically opposite to, and incompatible with the strongest principles of our nature, that we are inclined to believe that its existence (in a perfect state) is altogether ideal, and if it had ever been completely carried into practice, the baneful effect would have been so immediate, that the total annihilation of public spirit and enterprise would have been the inevitable consequence. We therefore cannot help doubting, that most authors have, from various obvious reasons, been led to exaggerate a little in their description of this phenomenon in the constitution of Hindoo society. We are the more inclined to adopt this opinion, as we find that many intelligent writers do not by any means confirm the perfect separation of these castes, in their intercourse with society; and that it is to be remarked, that the latter authors who have had the best opportunities of observing with accuracy, are those which have given us this more probable account." Edinburgh Review, vol. iv. p. 316.

Chapter V

RELIGION.

In considering any tribe or family of mankind, our view would be eminently imperfect were religion omitted; but in the case of the Hindoo the omission is impracticable, since it is his religion, and nothing else, that renders him what he is. By penetrating, therefore, if it be possible, to the core of his religious institutions, by studying the relations which in India appear to have always subsisted between sacred things and civil, we can alone hope to comprehend the Hindoo character. To all inquirers who shall neglect this clue it must for ever remain an enigma. Independently of this consideration, however, it can never be regarded as a matter of trifling curiosity to endeavour to comprehend those modes of faith which influence the condition of four hundred millions of human beings,—more than one-third of the whole human race being still Hindoos in religion. But the importance of the subject is at least equalled by the extreme obscurity which surrounds it. For notwithstanding the labours of our learned countrymen in the East, by which we have been admitted into the Hindoo Pantheon, we still grope about the huge structure in comparative darkness, amidst myriads of gods and goddesses, whose forms and attributes we can discern but dimly. Still, by carrying back our views to the remotest antiquity, and observing, though but by hasty glimpses, the rise and progress of this most extraordinary system of religion, we may perhaps succeed in forming a conception of it which shall not be very remote from the truth.

There appears to have existed among all ancient nations some faint idea of the one true God, whether preserved by tradition, or, which is equally probable, created by the efforts of unsophisticated reason. Abraham, whose own country and kindred had already relapsed into idolatry, found in Egypt, and among the Philistines on the coast of Palestine, a remarkably pure theism[1]. But no sooner did the priests of Egypt begin to reason upon the Great First Cause, and its operations upon matter, than they committed an error which appears to have some natural charm for man, since he has in all ages and countries shown a leaning towards it from the priest of Memphis down to Spinoza[2]. This is Pantheism,

[1] Jablonski, Pantheon Ægyptiacum, tom. ii. Proleg. p. x. This writer, as well as Hyde (Hist. Rel. Vet. Pers. c. 2), imagines, but upon what authority does not appear, that the fame of Abraham had reached the Brahmins. His conjecture that the Egyptians derived from this great patriarch the rite of circumcision, seems to be still more destitute of foundation. However, he traces with remarkable felicity the causes and progress of idolatry. Even so early as the time of Jacob, the great city of *On*, or Heliopolis, had been erected in honour of the sun, (p. xix.) The priests, now greatly multiplied, had extensive estates assigned them for their support, which were left by Joseph from taxation: an immunity mentioned by Herodotus, (ii. 168.) The worship of animals also had begun, in consequence of which the Egyptians abstained from eating the flesh of certain animals. Hence their hatred of *foreign shepherds* who killed and ate their flocks. However, they offered up in sacrifice bulls and calves, but not cows. Herod. ii. 168.

[2] "An non diceres," says Jablonski, "Spinozam sua ab hisce Ægyptiis mutuatum esse?" tom. i. p. 36.—The soul, they taught, was a particle of the divine æther, which, without consciousness, animated successively myriads of sentient beings. They worshipped brute matter and the elements; and, according to Herodotus, (lib. ii. cap. 123,) their eight greater divinities were the four elements, the sun, the moon, day, and night: mere pantheism. Diogenes Laertius likewise accuses them of pantheism. But Jablonski maintains that the more ancient Egyptian philosophers believed in one God. This infinite

by which the Deity is confounded with the universe. An exactly similar process appears to have taken place in Hindoostan. The *Upanishads*, or doctrinal books of the Vedas, in which alone we discover the primitive religion of the Hindoos, undoubtedly inculcate the belief of one Supreme God, in whom the universe is comprehended; but already had they begun to address the Deity by different appellations, a practice which was, perhaps, among the first causes of polytheism. "The deities invoked appear, on a cursory inspection of the Veda, to be as various as the authors of the prayers addressed to them; but according to the most ancient annotations on the Indian scriptures, those numerous names of persons and things are all resolvable into different titles of three deities, and ultimately of one God. The Nighantu, or Glossary of the Vedas, concludes with three lists of names of deities: the first comprising such as are deemed synonymous with fire; the second with air; and the third with the sun. In the last part of the Niructa[3], which entirely relates to deities, it is twice asserted that there are but three Gods; '*Tisra eva devatâh.*' The further inference that these intend but one deity is supported by many passages in the Veda, and is very clearly and concisely stated in the beginning of the index to the Rig-Veda, on the authority of the Niructa, and of

spirit, which, like the Brahma of the Hindoos, included both sexes, is supposed to have been a subtile fire, and was called *Phtha*. Yet the worship of this God, like that of Brahma in India, died away. He had, in fact, in all Egypt, but one single temple, which was at Memphis. Panth. Ægypt. tom. i. p. 31—52. For the opinions of Spinoa, see Buhle, Hist. de la Philos. Mod. tom. iii. p. 434—563; Brucker, Instit. Hist. Phil. p. 822; Tennemann, Man. Hist. de la Phil. tom. ii. p. 99, 102.

[3] An ancient treatise on the obsolete dialect in which some parts of the Vedas are written.

the Veda itself." In this important passage it is observed, that "the deities are only three, whose places are the earth, the intermediate region, and heaven: namely, fire, air, and the sun. They are pronounced to be the deities of the mysterious names (*Bhur*, *bhuvah*, *swar*) severally, and (Prajâpati), the lord of creatures, is the deity of them collectively. The syllable Om[4], intends every deity; it belongs to him who dwells in the supreme abode: it appertains to (*Brahma*) the vast one; to God, to the superintending soul. Other deities belonging to those several regions are portions of the [three] gods; for they are variously named and described, on account of their different operations: but in fact there is only one deity, the Great Soul. He is called the sun, for he is the soul of all beings, and that is declared by the sage, 'the sun is the soul of what moves, and of that which is fixed.' Other deities are portions of him: and that is expressly declared by the sage[5]," &c. This, as Mr. Colebrooke observes, shows, what

[4] This mysterious word, pronounced as written in the text, is, according to the Hindoo commentators, composed of three letters, A. U. M., representing the three Gods of the *Trimurti*, or Hindoo Trinity. Sir William Jones conjectures that the "Great One" intended by the word Om may be the same with the On of the Egyptians, that is, the sun. Works, vol. iii. p. 349, 350. In the Institutes of Menu, the Brahmin is directed to mutter to himself this holy syllable, both at the commencement and conclusion of all his lectures on the Vedas, without which nothing, it is asserted, will be long retained. Previous to this, however, he is expected to sit on the culms of *Kusa* grass (*Poa cynosuroides*), with their points towards the east, and to suppress his breath thrice. The legislator then informs us that "Brahma *milked out*, as it were, from the three Vedas, the letter A, the letter U, and the letter M, which form by their coalition the triliteral monosyllable;" and adds, a little farther on, that this syllable "is a symbol of God, the Lord of created Beings." Chap. ii. ver. 74, 77, 84.

[5] Colebrooke, 'on the Vedas;' Asiat. Res. vol. viii. p. 395, &c. Compare Menu, chap. xii. ver. 123.

is also deducible from various texts of the Hindoo scriptures, that the ancient Hindoo religion recognizes but one God, yet not sufficiently discriminating the creature from the Creator.

Among the prayers and hymns of the Yajur-Veda, there are various passages of obscure, irregular sublimity, in which a yearning to inculcate the unity of God is clearly distinguishable, in the midst of ideas of a pantheistical tendency. "Fire is that original cause; the sun is *that;* so is air; so is the moon; such too is that pure Brahm[6], and those waters, and that lord of creatures. Moments, and other measures of time, proceeded from the effulgent person, whom none can apprehend as an object of perception, above, around, or in the midst. Of him whose glory is so great, there is no image; he it is who is celebrated in various holy strains. Even he is the God, who pervades all

[6] *Brahme,* or *Brahm*, the One Incomprehensible God, must by no means be confounded with *Brahmâ*, one of the persons of the *Trimurti.* It is generally supposed, and is positively asserted by Ward, that no temple has ever been erected in India to the true God. Colonel Tod, however, informs us that there still exists entire at Cheetore an enormous and costly fabric, dedicated to "*Brimha,*" the Creator, not "*Brahma.*" Being to "the ONE," and consequently containing no idol, it may thus have escaped the ruthless fury of the invaders. Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 275. The same author supposes that pure theism was once found in India, p. 535. He afterwards appears to lose sight of the above temple, when, speaking of the numerous shrines round Lake Pohkur, he says, "By far the most conspicuous edifice is the shrine of the Creator *Brimha.* . . This is the *sole tabernacle* dedicated to the ONE GOD which I ever saw or have heard of in India," p. 774. By *Brimha* Colonel Tod seems to mean the God properly called *Brahmâ*, the first of the Hindoo triad, and creator of the universe; and by *Brahma,* (by some writers spelt *Brahme* or *Brahm,*) the abstract and impersonal divine essence, to which no temples seem ever to have been erected, and which is not an object of external worship, but only of pious meditation.

regions; he is the first born; it is he who is in the womb; he who is born; and he who will be produced: he severally and universally remains with all persons. He, prior to whom nothing was born, and who became all things; himself the lord of creatures, with a body composed of sixteen members, being delighted by creation, produced the three luminaries, the sun, the moon, and fire. To what God should we offer oblations but to him who made the fluid sky and solid earth; who fixed the solar orb and celestial abode; and who framed drops of rain in the atmosphere? To what God should we offer oblations but to him whom heaven and earth mentally contemplate, while they are strengthened and embellished by offerings, and illuminated by the sun rising above them. The wise man views that mysterious Being in whom the universe perpetually exists, resting on that sole support. In him this world is absorbed; from him it issues; in creatures he is twined and wove with various forms of existence. Let the wise man who is conversant with the import of revelation, promptly celebrate that immortal Being, the mysteriously existing and various abode: he who knows its three states (its creation, continuance, and destruction), which are involved in mystery, is father of the father. That Brahme in whom the gods attain immortality, while they abide in the third or celestial region, is our venerable parent, and the providence which governs all worlds[7]."

In another part of the Veda, which deals in bold personifications, the supreme and universal soul is introduced pronouncing a hymn in its own praise: "I range with the Rudras, with the Vasus, with the Adityas, and the Viswadevas. I uphold both the sun and the ocean, the firmament and fire, and both

[7] Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 431, 433.

the Aswins. I support the moon, destroyer of foes, and the sun, entitled Twashtri, Pushan, or Bhaga. I grant wealth to the honest votary who performs sacrifices, offers oblations, and satisfies the deities. Me, who am queen, the conferrer of wealth, the possessor of knowledge, and first of such as merit worship, the gods render, universally, present everywhere, and pervader of all beings. He who eats food through me, as he who sees, who breathes, or who hears through me, yet knows me not, is lost; hear then the faith which I pronounce. Even I declare this self, who is worshipped by gods and men: I make strong whom I choose; I make him Brahma holy and wise. For Rudra, I bend the bow, to slay the demon, foe of Brahma; for the people I make war on their foes; and I pervade heaven and earth. I bore the father on the head of this universal mind; and my origin is in the midst of the ocean; and therefore do I pervade all beings, and touch this heaven with my form. Originating all beings, I pass like the breeze; I am above this heaven, beyond this earth; and what is the great one, that am I[8]."

This doctrine, which, whether originally imported from India or not, has always found advocates in Europe, has been condensed with singular felicity into a very small number of lines in the Essay on Man:—

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul,
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth as in the ethereal frame;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;

[8] Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 403.

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full as perfect in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all[9]."

The theory contained in the above lines is so strikingly expressive of what the Hindoos think and believe on this subject, that, when they were read on the banks of the Ganges to Gopala, a learned Brahmin, he started from his seat, begged a copy of them, and declared that the author must have been a Hindoo[10].

Thus we perceive that, according to the ancient religion of India, matter and all the phenomena of this visible universe have their root in the Deity, who is the soul of all, of man as well as of the world. The gods, as well as the universe, the elements and all created beings, are mere emanations from the Great One, in whom, when they shall have sported for awhile, like shadows, upon the theatre of this unsubstantial world, they will again be absorbed and lost. But, if every thing that exists be but an emanation from God, a visible manifestation of the invisible essence, a form, in short, of the Divinity himself, where is the impiety of setting up the water, the fire, the air, the earth as an object of worship?

"Is not the seat of Jove, earth, sea, and air,
And heaven and virtue? Where would we farther seek
The God? Where'er we move, whate'er we see
Is Jove[11]!"

Such were the ideas necessarily flowing from the

[9] Pope's Essay on Man, book i. ver. 244—257.
[10] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. Introd. p. lvii.
[11] Speech of Cato in Lucan.

original creed, which, sublime as it was, and pious in intention, differed in no respect from modern pantheism, that led to the worship of the elements. This modification of the primitive system had already taken place at the era of the composition of the Vedas, which, according to many learned writers, are not much more modern than the Pentateuch[12]: for those religious rhapsodies abound with hymns to the water, fire, &c.

Of all the elements, Water, from which the universe is said to have been created, is by the Hindoos accounted the most holy. To this the Brahmin, after bathing soon after dawn in the Ganges, still addresses his prayers. "O waters!" says he, "since ye afford delight, grant us present happiness, and the rapturous sight of the supreme God. Like tender mothers, make us here partakers of your most auspicious essence. We became contented with your essence, with which ye satisfy the universe. Waters! grant it unto us." Or, as otherwise expounded, the third text may signify,—"Eagerly do we approach your essence, which supports the universal abode. Waters! grant it unto us." In the Agni-Purâṅa, the ablution is otherwise directed:—"At twilight let a man attentively recite the prayers addressed to water, and perform an ablution by throwing water on the crown of his head, on the earth, towards the sky; again towards the sky, on the earth, on the crown of his head, on the earth, again on the crown of his head, and lastly on the earth[13]." Among the early philosophers of Greece, more particularly of the Ionic school, water was regarded as the first principle of all things, though mind or intellect was introduced creating the whole universe out of this primeval element. Matter, therefore, among the Pagans of the west, was regarded as eternal; and the Hindoos,

[12] See Colebrooke, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 489, &c.

[13] Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 347.

following the doctrine of their Vedas, likewise admit this opinion[14]. In fact, regarding matter as an emanation from God, as a visible form of his essence, they could do no otherwise.

Fire, the most active, the most terrible, and, at the same time, the most ethereal of the elements, early obtained a distinguished place in the Hindoo Pantheon. Agni, the god who presides over this element, is represented as a corpulent man riding on a goat. His hair, beard, eyebrows, and eyes, resemble burnished copper in colour; his breast is of the hue of the dawn; he holds a spear in his right hand, a bead-roll in his left; and from his body issue a thousand streams of glory[15]. He has neither temples nor images, but is worshipped in the daily ceremonies of the Brahmins, and in his honour a perpetual fire like that of Vesta is preserved. The following prayer to be used in addressing this divinity occurs in the White Yajur-Veda. "For opulence and wisdom I solicit this wonderful lord of the altar, the friend of Indra, most desirable (fire): may this oblation be effectual. Fire! make me this day wise by means of that wisdom, which the gods and the fathers worship: be this oblation efficacious. May Varuna grant me wisdom; may fire and Prajâpati confer on me sapience; may Indra and air vouchsafe me knowledge; may Providence give me understanding: be this oblation happily offered! May the priest and the soldier both share my prosperity; may the gods grant me supreme happiness: to thee who art that felicity be this oblation effectually presented[16]."

14 Ward, vol. i. Introd. p. 72.

15 Ward, vol. i. Introd. p. 83, 84. "There seems," says this author, "to be no order of females among the Hindoos resembling the Vestal virgins; but many Hindoo women, at the total wane of the moon, to fulfil a vow, watch for twenty-four hours over a lamp made with clarified butter, and prevent its being extinquished till the time for the appearance of the new moon."

16 Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 433, 434.

According to the views of the Abbé Dubois, who, on this subject, may be consulted with advantage, the worship of the earth preceded that of water. "*Earth*," says he, "is the element from which all the productions most necessary to man proceed. From her bosom are collected the grain and the plants which serve for his nourishment. She is the universal mother of all living creatures. She is therefore the first of the gods: she is Brahma. But without the seasonable visitation of the rain and the dews, in a land hot and without water, the labours of the husbandman would be fruitless, and the soil, now so exuberant in its increase, would become barren and deserted. *Water* is the great preserver of whatever the earth engenders, or makes to germinate with life. Water with all its blessings has therefore become the second god of the Hindoos, and holds the honours of Vishnu. But what could the sluggish earth, even with the aid of the water, so uncongenial and cold in its nature, have effected in their sterile union but for the fire, the principal of warmth, which came to vivify and quicken the mass? Without this enlivening element, the chilled plants would have refused to show their gay attire, or to acquire the maturity necessary to constitute a fit aliment for man. But *Fire* not only invigorates all animated nature, and developes every thing to its utmost perfection, but it also accelerates dissolution and decay,—a process not less necessary, because from corruption nature is restored and germinates afresh. Fire, therefore, has contributed as much as the other elements, and equally deserves the general adoration and worship which have bestowed on it the title and honours of Siva[17]." The same author observes that, in ancient times, the worship of the elements among the Hindoos was in all probability

[17] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the Hindoos' p. 375, 376.

consecrated by temples erected to their service, though he had never been able to discover that any vestiges of such buildings remained. According to Abraham Roger, however, there was yet standing in his time, in a district bordering on the coast of Coromandel, a temple erected in honour of the five elements. And there are still at Benares several small structures in honour of fire, where a perpetual flame is maintained, which may be regarded as so many chapels consecrated to this element. The code of laws attributed to Menu makes frequent allusion to the worship of fire, which in more modern times came, as we shall presently see, to be vulgarly confounded with Siva.

To the adoration of the elements[18], succeeded that of the stars and the planets, which, of all forms of Paganism, is perhaps the least reprehensible, and the most natural. For to the rude, untutored eye, the "Host of Heaven," clothed in that calm beauty which distinguishes an oriental night, might well appear to be instinct with some divine principle, endowed with consciousness, and the power to influence, from its throne of unchanging splendour on high, the fortunes of transitory mortals. There is, as all contemplative minds must often have felt, a religious beauty in the night, which, in the absence of a purer religion, might be easily moulded into idolatry. The feelings which arise in the uninstructed mind, at such a season, are thus embodied by one of the authors of the Vedas, in a Hymn to Night. "Night approaches illumined with stars and planets, and, looking on all sides with numberless eyes, overpowers all meaner lights. The

[18] The worship of the planets, which formed a remarkable feature in the early religion of Egypt, in process of time fell into desuetude. Jablonski, tom. i. pt. ii. p. 126. See in the same writer, p. 135, the curious fancies of the ancients respecting the colour of the planets.

immortal goddess pervades the firmament, covering the low vallies and shrubs, and the lofty mountains and trees, but soon she disturbs the gloom with celestial effulgence. Advancing with brightness at length she recalls her sister morning; and the nightly shade gradually melts away. May she at this time be propitious! She in whose early watch we may calmly recline in our mansions, as birds repose on the trees. Mankind now sleep in their towns; now herds and flocks peacefully slumber, and winged creatures, even swift falcons and vultures. O night! avert from us the she-wolf and the wolf; and, oh! suffer us to pass thee in soothing rest! Oh morn! remove in due time this black, yet visible overwhelming darkness, which at present infolds me, as thou enablest me to remove the cloud of their dells. Daughter of heaven, I approach thee with praise, as the cow approaches her milker; accept, O night! not the hymn only, but the oblation of thy suppliant who prays that his foes may be subdued[19]."

But among the heavenly bodies, the Sun, regarded by ancient nations as the great pervading soul of the universe, vindicates to itself the most distinguished place. To this great luminary, or perhaps to the God who was supposed to preside over it, and to have his dwelling therein, is addressed the Gâyatri, or "Holiest Text," of the Vedas: "LET US MEDITATE ON THE ADORABLE LIGHT OF THE DIVINE RULER: MAY IT GUIDE OUR INTELLECTS[20]." According to another text of the sacred books, which appears to have been regarded by Sir William Jones as expla-

[19] Extracts from the Vedas, Works of Sir William Jones, vol. xvii. p. 380, 381.

[20] Mr. Colebrooke, Asiat. Res. viii. p. 400. Compare Ram Mohun Roy, 'on divine worship by means of the Gâyatri,' in his 'Translation of several principal books, &c. of the Vedas,' p. 109—118.

natory of the Gâyatri, the prayer contained in this "Holiest Text" is not addressed to the sun, but the Deity. "What the sun and light are to this visible world, that are the supreme good and truth to the intellectual and visible universe; and as our corporeal eyes have a distinct perception of objects enlightened by the sun, thus our souls acquire certain knowledge, by meditating on the light of truth which emanates from the being of beings: that is the light by which alone our minds can be directed in the path to beatitude."

The same writer supposes that not only Krishna[21], but the three gods of the Trimurti also, were identical with the sun. "I am inclined, indeed, to believe that not only Krishna, or Vishnu, but even Brahmâ and Siva, when united, and expressed by the mystical word, OM, were designed by the first idolaters to represent the solar fire; but Phœbus, or the orb of the sun personified, is adored by the Indians as the god Surya, whence the sect, who pay him particular adoration, are called Sauras. Their poets and painters describe his car as drawn by seven green horses, preceded by Aruna, or the dawn, who acts as his charioteer, and followed by thousands of Genii worshipping him and modulating his praises[22]." To speak the truth, the Vedas themselves are full of incoherence on this point, now appearing to discriminate between the Deity and his great visible minister, and now completely confounding them. "The concluding prayer is subjoined to teach the various manifestations of that light, which is the sun himself. It is Brahma, the Supreme Soul. The sun, says Yajnyawalkya, is Brahma; this is a certain truth revealed in the sacred *upanishads*, and in various

[21] Extracts from the Vedas, Works of Sir William Jones, vol. xiii. p. 367.

[22] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 262.

sâkhas (divisions) of the Vedas. So the Bhavishya-Purâna, speaking of the sun: 'Because there is none greater than he, nor has been, nor will be, therefore he is celebrated as the Supreme Soul in all the Vedas'[23]."

Notwithstanding these exalted ideas of the solar power, the worship of water, in the present ritual of the Brahmins, precedes that of the sun. But when the primeval element has been adored, with due ceremonies, the Brahmin proceeds to worship the sun, standing on one foot, and resting the other against his ankle or heel. In this posture, with his face towards the east, and holding his hand open before him in a hollow form, he pronounces inaudibly the following prayer:—"The rays of light announce the splendid fiery sun, beautifully rising to illumine the universe. He rises, wonderful, the eye of the sun, of water, and of fire, collective power of gods; he fills heaven, earth, and sky, with his luminous net; he is the soul of all, which is fixed or locomotive. That eye, supremely beneficial, rises pure from the east; may we see him a hundred years; may we live a hundred years; may we hear a hundred years. May we be preserved by the divine power, contemplating heaven above the region of darkness, approach the deity, most splendid of luminaries." The following prayer may also be subjoined: "Thou art self-existent, thou art the most excellent ray; thou givest effulgence: grant it unto me[24]." The worship of this god is more particularly celebrated on Sunday, at sun-rise, in the month of Magha. Those persons who adopt this god as their guardian deity, and are called *Sauras*, never eat until they have worshipped the sun, and fast when it is entirely covered with clouds. Among the numerous appellations of

[23] Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 352.
[24] Idem, p. 355.

this god are *Dyumani*, "the Gem of the Sky;" *Tarani*, "the Saviour;" *Grahapati*, "the Lord of the Stars;" and *Mitra*, "the Friend," understood to mean friend of the water-lily, which expands itself at the rising of the sun, and when he retires shuts up [25].

But, besides the sun, all the other heavenly bodies are worshipped:—the planets, the constellations, the signs of the Zodiac, the stars in general, and in particular the star Canopus, which, by the Hindoos, is denominated "the Sage." Of this mighty host, some are adored during the festivals of the other gods, others separately. The constellations are chiefly worshipped on the birth of children, and on the anniversary of their birth-day. The destinies of mortals are supposed by the Hindoos to be regulated by the influence of the stars. Those among them who happen to be born under an evil planet are often filled with melancholy and abandon themselves to despair, regarding it as useless to watch over an existence connected with such fatal omens [26].

The planets, to whom a small offering is always presented during the great festivals, are frequently worshipped separately by the sick or unfortunate. The ceremonies, which are the same as on other occasions, close with a burnt-offering to each of the nine planets. The gifts accompanying the worship of the different planets are various: at that of the sun, a milch cow; of the moon [27], a shell; of Mars, a bull;

[25] Ward, vol. iii. p. 32—35.

[26] Idem, p. 62, 63.

[27] The Moon, in the Hindoo Mythology, is masculine, and its image is that of a white man, drawn by ten horses, or sitting on a water-lily. Ward, vol. iii. p. 64. Among the ancient Egyptians, also, the Moon was a masculine divinity. Jablonski, Proleg. tom. ii. p. xl. Creuzer (Religions de l'Ant., book iv. cap. 3,) has, with great industry, collected scattered notices of the ancients on the worship of the god *Lunus*, which prevailed in all Asia Minor, Albania, and even in Syria. He was repre-

of Mercury, a morsel of gold; of Jupiter, a piece of cloth; of Venus, a horse; of Saturn, a black cow; of Rahu, a piece of iron; and of Ketu, a goat. The officiating Brahmin puts on garments of divers colours, and offers up different kinds of flowers, as he passes from the worship of one planet to that of another. To these deities must be added Indra, "the god with a thousand eyes," who is nothing but a personification of the visible heavens. The worship of Indra is annually celebrated, on the 14th of the lunar month Bhadra, and is accompanied by singing, music, and dancing. The greater number of the devotees are women. On the day of the festival, when fourteen kinds of fruit are offered to the god, a few blades of *durva* grass (*Agrostis linearis*) are bound round the right arm of the male, and the left of the female worshippers. In the heaven of Indra, all the pillars, alluding to the nightly beauty of the firmament, are composed of diamonds, while the palaces, with their couches and ottomans, are of pure gold. The whole is so richly ornamented with all kinds of precious stones, such as the jasper, opal, the chrysolite, the topaz, the sapphire, and the emerald, that its splendour exceeds the commingled brightness of twelve suns. Beneath the arched roof "fretted with golden fires," are innumerable forests and gardens abounding with flowers whose fragrance fills all heaven:—

> "The winds, perfumed, the balmy gale convey
> Through heaven, through earth, and all th' aërial way[28]."

This heaven is the dwelling-place of gods and sages, who are constantly entertained with music, dances,

sented on the medals of the Asiatic cities as a young man, wearing a Phrygian bonnet, or bearing a crescent on his forehead. His worship still subsisted, so late as the time of Cara calla, at Carrhæ in Mesopotamia. Spartian. in Carac. cap. 6, 7.

[28] Iliad, book xiv. ver. 199, 200.

and songs, and every species of pleasure and delight[29].

Anterior to the religion of the Brahmins, and coeval with the primitive worship of the elements, planets, and constellations, was an extraordinary form of superstition, which may be denominated demon worship[30]. Traces of this strange system are still discoverable in the wilder and more remote parts of the Dekkan. The *Telinga Banijigaru*, who are said to be pure Sudras, and are enumerated among the followers of Vishnu, have little real faith in the Brahminical creed, for in cases of danger they invariably recur to their original faith, and offer bloody sacrifices to several destructive spirits. Publicly the Brahmins affect to abhor this kind of worship, and denominate all these gods of the vulgar, *Saktis*, "evil spirits," or ministers of Siva. They refuse to act as their *Pujaris* (*i e.* priests), or to offer sacrifice at their temples. "Influenced, however, by superstition, although they condemn the practice, they in sickness occasionally send a small offering of fruit or money to these deities; but being ashamed to do it publicly, the present is generally conveyed by some child, who may be supposed to have made the offering by mistake. The small temples of these deities are very

[29] Ward, vol. iii. p. 29, 30.

[30] "The worship of aërial beings, under the general name of spirits, is easily accounted for from the proneness of mankind to superstitious fears respecting invisible existence, and from the notion found in the Hindoo writings, that every form of animated existence has its titular divinity presiding over it. These appear to have been the first gods worshipped in India, though such a system of mythology could in no way account for the existence and government of the universe; which exhibited a process for which this system made no provision. This might therefore induce later Hindoo theologians to add three new gods, under the character of the CREATOR, the PRESERVER, and the DESTROYER:—BRAHMA, VISHNU, and SIVA." Ward, vol. i. Introd. p. 73.

numerous, and the Pujaris are in general of the impure castes. I am inclined indeed to believe that they are the original gods of the country; and that these impure castes are the remains of the rude tribes that occupied the country before the origin of the Brahmins, or other sects that introduced forms of worship more complicated, and more favourable to the priesthood[31]."

The *Coramas*, another tribe in the Dekkan, have never adopted the Brahminical creed. They have neither priests nor sacred order. In times of affliction they chiefly invoke Vencati Râmana, the Tripat'hi Vishnu, to whom they vow small offerings of money. In the depths of their woods and forests, they frequently sacrifice various animals to Muni, a male deity, said to be a servant of Siva. They neither possess nor worship images. "Once in two or three years the Coramas of a village make a collection among themselves, and purchase a brass pot, in which they put five branches of the *Melia azadirachta*, and a cocoa-nut. This is covered with flowers, and sprinkled with sandal-wood water. It is kept in a small temporary shed for three days, during which time the people feast and drink, sacrificing lambs and fowls to Marima, the daughter of Siva. At the end of the three days, they throw the pot into the water[32]."

Among the *Palliwanlu*, who have erected temples to Mutialima, one of the feminine destructive powers named *Saktis*, the bloody sacrifices are performed of cutting off the animal's head before the door of the temple, and invoking the deity to partake of the victim. There is no altar, nor is the blood sprinkled on the image; the slaughtered animal serves the votaries for a feast. The priests of these temples,

[31] Buchanan, Journey through Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 242, 243.
[32] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 250.

who are not Brahmins, can neither read nor write; but their office is hereditary.

The *Woddaru*, a tribe of Telinga origin, who dig canals, excavate wells, and tanks, and construct roads, are also worshippers of the Saktis. The image of their goddess Yellama is constantly carried about with them when they travel, and they annually celebrate a feast of three days in her honour. During the festival the image is placed in a temporary chapel, and one of the tribes officiates as priest. Offerings of brandy, palm wine, rice, and flowers are made to the goddess, and bloody sacrifices are offered up before the chapel. The flesh, however, of the victims is not eaten[33].

The *Morasu*, another tribe of the Telingana nation, said to be of the Sudra caste, worship one of the Saktis, called Kâla Bhairava, which signifies the Black Dog. The temple of the sect is at Sitibutta, near Calanore. The shrine being very dark, the votaries, who are admitted no further than the door[34], know not exactly the form of the image, but it is supposed to represent a man on horseback. The animals sacrificed are eaten by the votaries, but the priest never joins in the feast. To this god a very singular offering is made. When a young woman has borne several children, terrified lest the angry deity should deprive her of her offspring, she goes to the temple, and, as an offering to appease his wrath, cuts off one or two of the fingers from her right hand. The *Morasu* sacrifice to the other female

[33] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 262, 312, 315.

[34] There was at Sicyon, a temple of Venus, into which none but the priestess and her attendant was allowed to enter. The votaries, like those of Kâla Bhairava, stood upon the threshold of the temple, and from thence addressed their prayers to the goddess. Pausan. lib. ii. cap. 10. The priestess was a virgin, from which Larcher conjectures that the goddess was Venus Urania. Mémoire sur Vénus, p. 68.

Saktis, but pray neither to Vishnu nor Siva, nor have they any priests[35]. A Purohita, or family priest, from another tribe officiates at marriages, and during the ceremonies which they celebrate annually, and at the new moons in honour of the manes of their ancestors.

It would seem that when the Brahmins subjugated the rude tribes of Southern India, the diffusion of their creed by no means kept pace with the increase of their political power. Each nation appears to have retained its primitive faith. And the Brahmins, by a process not uncommon in the history of mankind, instead of imposing their own opinions, have been influenced by the superstition of their nominal converts, whose gods they have adopted; and as these are of a malignant nature, the Brahmins, to save appearances, denominated them servants of Siva, the power of destruction. "When in sickness and distress they invoke with fear and trembling the power of Bhairava, and of the female Saktis; who were formerly, perhaps, considered by the natives as the malignant spirits of the woods, mountains, and rivers; and worshipped by sacrifices, like the gods of the rude tribes which now inhabit the hilly region east of Bengal, and whose poverty has hitherto prevented the incursions of the sacred orders of their more learned western neighbours[36]."

Of these wild aboriginal tribes of the south, some appear never to have adopted the dogma of the immortality of the soul[37]; others "believe that after death wicked men become devils, and that good men are born again in a human form. The spirits of men who die without having married, become *Vîrika*[38];

35 Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 319.
36 Idem, p. 320.
37 As, for example, the *Mucuas*. Buchanan, vol. ii. p. 528.
38 The worship of these spirits, the *Virika*, does not extend

and to their memory have small temples and images erected, where offerings of cloth, rice, and the like, are made to their manes. If this be neglected, they appear in dreams, and threaten those who are forgetful of their duty. These temples consist of a heap or cairn of stones, in which the roof of a small cavity is supported by two or three flags; and the image is a rude shapeless stone, which is occasionally oiled, as in this country all other images are [39]."

In Coimbatore, the Sivaïtes, when afflicted with illness, make vows to ornament the temple of the Sakti, who is supposed to cause the disease; and if they recover, suspend an image of a child or a horse made of potter's clay in the court of the shrine. Among the *Mucuas*, Bhadra Kâli, one of the female Saktis, represented by a log of wood, is propitiated four times a year by the sacrifice of a cock, and offerings of fruit. These Saktis, or destructive spirits, are supposed to live in the stars, clouds, and lower regions of the heavens, or even in the heavens on Mahâ-Meru, the sacred mountain in Hindoo mythology. In *Tulava*, the Brahmins, adopting the more ancient superstition of the country, act as priests in the temples of these spirits, but being averse to the shedding of blood, they offer up sacrifices of paste, made in the form of animals [40].

Bhûta, the general name by which these malevolent spirits are distinguished, also signifies Element, from which it may be conjectured that they are worshipped as the "Lords of the Elements." In many parts of India no other form of religion is admitted. This is the case in "that long chain of mountains which extend on the west of the Mysore, where the

to the south of the Cavery. It is, in fact, a local superstition. Buchanan, ii. 120.

39 Buchanan, vol. i. p. 359.

40 Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 330, 528; iii. 78, 92.

greater part of the inhabitants practise no other worship than that of the devil. Every house and each family has its own particular Bhûta, who stands for its tutelary god; and to whom daily prayers and propitiatory sacrifices are offered, not only to incline him to withhold his own machinations, but to defend them from the evils which the Bhûtas of their neighbours or enemies might inflict. In those parts, the image of the demon is everywhere seen, represented in a hideous form, and often by a shapeless stone. Each of these fiends has its particular name; and some, who are more powerful and atrocious than others, are preferred in the same proportion[41]."

The victims commonly offered to these demons are buffaloes, hogs, rams, and cocks. When rice is offered it must be tinged with blood, and of flowers the red only, as appearing to be blood-stained, are presented to them. They are likewise propitiated with inebriating drinks. This demon-worship, of which traces are to be found even in the Veda, chiefly prevails in deserts, remote and solitary places, and in the wild inaccessible gorges of the mountains. In such positions the ideas of men are generally gloomy. Nature presents itself to their eyes clothed in awful forms. Silence broods over the scene, or the tempest, succeeding to silence, roars through their caverns and forests. Each hill and forest and cavern, by degrees obtains its presiding spirit, and the infernal mythology is established. To this ancient superstition, which is still more widely diffused in India than is generally supposed, succeeded the worship of Brahmâ, invented by those Brahmins, who were so renowned among the nations of antiquity for their sanctity and wisdom. The era of the establishment of this religion cannot be ascertained, but

[41] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 451, 452.

it may be supposed to have been anterior, by many ages, to the composition of the Vedas, which would seem to have been an attempt to combine into one system the incongruous elements of the popular superstitions. This, however, has been thought by some writers to have been the original religion of India. Yielding to the suggestions of their imaginations, or rather adopting without reflection from the poets ideas which are tolerable only in poetry, they have represented to themselves a race of men "clothed with innocence and piety, who offered to Brahmâ sacrifices as pure as their hearts, the first-fruits of the fields, and the milk of their flocks and herds[42]."

No bloody sacrifices were offered to Brahmâ, because this god, being regarded as the Creator[43] of the Universe, could not be conceived to delight in the destruction of the beings which he had formed. The worship of Brahmâ afforded too little employment to the Brahmins to be allowed long to prevail. It seems quickly to have become obsolete, or rather to have sunk into a subordinate superstition, little regarded in the midst of more showy material systems. At present there are no temples to this god in India, nor does any person adopt him as his guardian deity; though the Brahmins in their daily devotions repeat an incantation, containing a description of his image, and as an act of worship present him with a single

[42] Creuzer, Religions de l'Antiquité, tom. i. p. 140.

[43] Sir William Jones, on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India, Asiat. Res. i. 241—245. Paterson, in his Essay on the Origin of the Hindoo Religion, speaks of the "annihilation of the sect and worship of Brahmâ." Asiat. Res. viii. 47. But, whatever may have been the fate of his *sect*, his *worship* still, in a certain degree, continues to prevail in India. Creuzer seems to have been deceived by this passage, for, speaking of the paramount influence of Sivaism, he says—"Les traces même du culte de Brahmâ furent effacées." Rél. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 141.

flower. A small quantity of clarified butter is likewise presented to him at the time of a burnt-offering. An annual festival in his honour is celebrated in the month Magha, at the full of the moon; on which occasion an earthen image of the god, with Siva on his right hand and Vishnu on his left, is worshipped with songs, dances, and music; and on the morrow the three gods are thrown together into the Ganges. In a mysterious passage of the Yajur-Veda, Brahmâ is spoken of after his emanation from the golden egg, as experiencing fear at being alone in the universe; he therefore willed the existence of another, and instantly he became masculo-feminine[44]. The two sexes thus existing in the god, were immediately, by another act of volition, divided in twain, and became man and wife. This tradition seems to have found its way into Greece, for the Androgyne of Plato is but another version of this oriental mythus.

Upon the decay of the worship of Brahmâ, two sects seem to have sprung up in India, the one composed of the worshippers of Siva, the other of those of Vishnu. The exact order of time in which these sects appeared is unknown; but that of Siva is supposed to be the more ancient. Upon the authority of an allegorical fable in the Scanda-Purâna, Sivaism, like the religion of Mohammed, has been said to have been established by the sword[45]; but the fable is dark, and its interpretation more than doubtful. The sect arose, perhaps, in troubled times, in the midst of wars, foreign or civil, or its founders may have con-

[44] The Orientals sometimes represent the vivifying force of nature as masculine, sometimes as feminine, and at other times, as in the case of Brahma, as both masculine and feminine. The *Venus Amathusia* of the Greeks was thus represented: "putant eandem marem ac feminam esse," says Macrobius. Saturn. lib. iii. cap. 8. Serv. ad. Æneid, lib. ii. ver. 632.

[45] Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 47; Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 141.

ducted a crusade against the more peaceful followers of Brahma; or, which is still more probable, it may have been introduced by a victorious nation, who established at once its power and its faith. However this may be, the worship of this god has taken deeper root, and is more widely extended than that of any other. He is represented in various ways. Sometimes as a silver-coloured man, with five faces, and in each face three eyes, of which the third is in the forehead[46]. He is clothed in a garment of tiger skin, and is seated upon a lotos[47]. On other occasions he is depicted with one head, but he has still a third eye, with the figure of a half moon on the forehead, and is riding upon a bull, naked, and covered with ashes, his eyes inflamed with intoxicating drugs: in one of his hands he carries a horn, in the other a drum. Another form of Siva is the Lingam[48], a smooth black stone almost in the shape of a sugar-loaf, with a rude representation of the Yoni projecting from its base. It is under this symbol that Siva

[46] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 248, 249; Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 177.

[47] The gods of the Tatars, Japanese, and other Oriental nations, are frequently represented seated upon this flower. Ward, vol. iii. p. 11.

[48] "This idol, which is spread all over India, is generally inclosed in a little box of silver, which all the votaries of that god (Siva) wear about their necks." Dubois, p. 438. This is not quite correct. Buchanan found various sects of Sivaïtes in the Dekkan who did not wear this symbol. Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 120. We find among the Egyptians the same idol worn as an ornament. In fact, the *Crux ansata*, which is constantly observed in the hands of the Nilotic statues, is nothing but the Yoni-Lingam of the Hindoos. This figure is still the astronomical sign of the planet Venus. Jablonski, tom. i. part i. p. 287; part ii. p. 131. It is a curious fact, says Colonel Tod, that in the *terra cotta* images of Isis, dug up near her temple at Pæstum, she holds in her right hand an exact representation of the Hindoo lingam and yoni combined. Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 575.

is most frequently worshipped. Innumerable temples have been erected in his honour throughout Hindoostan, where the Yoni-Lingam, (*i. e.*, probably, the symbol of the vivifying generative power of nature,) is the only image worshipped. Siva is sometimes worshipped under the appellation of *Mahâ Kâla*, or "Time, the Great Destroyer," in which form alone he is propitiated with bloody sacrifices. His image, in this character, is that of a smoke-coloured youth with three eyes, clothed in red garments, with a chaplet of human skulls about his neck[49]. This god is undoubtedly a personification of the principle of life, which, in passing from form to form, first animates, vivifies, and developes, and then wears away and destroys the sheath in which it is enclosed. It is the material principle which pervades the universe, considered as distinct from the great intellectual first cause.

The worship of Vishnu, which should, perhaps, be considered as a sort of reformed Sivaism, succeeded to that of the destroying and renovating god: but in proportion as it was more refined and spiritual, it was the less adapted to replace the popular superstition; and, accordingly, its progress appears to have been slow, and its followers at all times greatly inferior in numbers to those of Siva. They are divided into several sects, each of which has its secrets, its sacrifices, its *mantras*, and particular signs. "The most numerous of all is that whose members bear the mark of the *nama*, or three perpendicular lines, imprinted on their forehead, as a particular symbol of their extreme devotion for this divinity. The particular titles and attributes of Vishnu are those of Redeemer and Preserver of all things. The other gods, without excepting Brahmâ

[49] Ward, vol. iii. p. 14; Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 243; Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 140, 146, 159, 173.



Page 169. The Trimurti: Busts of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, in the Temple at Elephanta.

himself, have often stood in need of his assistance; and, but for his powerful help, must, on many arduous occasions, have fallen into perdition. This title of 'Preserver of all things' has made it necessary for him, on various occasions, to assume different forms, which the Hindoos call *avatars*, a word which may be rendered metamorphoses[50]." Of these *avatars*, or incarnations of Vishnu, ten are distinguished as the most important. They are, the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar, the Man-lion, the Dwarf, the two Râmas, Krishna, Buddha, and Kalki[51]. Nine of these are said to be passed, and the tenth is still expected.

"Stone images of Vishnu are made for sale, and worshipped in the houses of those who have chosen him for their guardian deity. There are no public festivals in honour of this god, yet he is worshipped at the offering of a burnt sacrifice; in the form of meditation used daily by the Brahmins; at the times when 'the five gods' are worshipped, and also at the commencement of each *srâddha*. No bloody sacrifices are offered to Vishnu. The offerings presented to him consist of fruit, flowers, water, clarified butter, sweetmeats, cloths, ornaments, &c. He is revered as the household god; and is worshipped when a person enters a new house, or at any other time to procure the removal of family misfortunes[52]." The description of the heaven of Vishnu, in the Mahâbhârata, is exceedingly gorgeous. It is eighty thousand miles in circumference, and formed entirely of gold. Its palaces are constructed with jewels, and all its

50 Dubois, p. 431.

51 See an extract of the Agni-Purâna translated by Col. Vans Kennedy in the Appendix to his Researches into the Nature and Affinity of Ancient and Hindoo Mythology. London, 1831, 4to.

52 Ward, vol. iii. p. 8.

pillars, architraves, and pediments, blaze and sparkle with gems. The crystal waters of the Ganges descend from the higher heavens on the head of Siva, and from thence, through the bunches of hair of the seven famous penitents, find their way to the plains, and form the river of Paradise. Here are also beautiful diminutive lakes of water, upon the surface of which myriads of red, blue, and white water-lilies, with a thousand petals, are seen floating. On a throne glorious as the meridian sun, sitting on water-lilies, is Vishnu[53], and on his right hand the goddess Lakshmi, shining like a continued blaze of lightning, while from her lovely form the fragrance of the lotos is diffused through the heaven. The praises of the god are perpetually chaunted by the beatified spirits who share his bliss; the gods sometimes unite their voices with those of the worshippers; and Garuda (sometimes pronounced Garura), the bird-god[54], guards the door.

The above three gods, Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Siva, form what is called the *Trimurti*, or Hindoo Triad. The word Trimurti signifies 'Three Forms,' and is used to designate these three gods, the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer of all things. These three deities are sometimes represented singly, with their peculiar attributes; and sometimes as blended into one body with three heads. It is in this last state that they obtain the name of Trimurti, or three

[53] In some of the Hindoo cosmogonies, Vishnu is represented reclining in a contemplative attitude on a leaf of the Indian fig-tree, or on a serpent which floats upon the surface of the ocean. From his navel springs a lotos, in the beautiful calix of which Brahmâ appears seated, ready to accomplish the work of creation. Sonnerat, Voy. aux Indes, tom. i. p. 171, 293; Dubois, p. 368; Creuzer, Rel. de l'Ant. tom. i. p. 178.

[54] As a real bird, the garuda is a large kind of heron, commonly called the adjutant-bird (*Ardea argala*). See Haughton's Bengali Dictionary, p. 2850.

powers. It appears also that this union of persons may have been intended to denote, that existence cannot be produced and reproduced, without the combination of the three-fold power of creation, conservation, and destruction [55]. The Trimurti is acknowledged and adored by the majority of Hindoos, who, although some castes attach themselves in a particular manner to the sect of Vishnu or Siva, when the three gods are united together, and form but one body, pay undivided worship to the Triad. In reality these three gods are by the Brahmins regarded as the same deity, contemplated in the capacity of *Creator*, *Preserver*, and *Destroyer* of all things; and the divine unity, thus considered, is worshipped under the mysterious triliteral name of *aum*, *om*, which is represented to have been formed from the Sanscrit initials of the three divinities who compose the Trimurti [56].

We can by no means descend, in this brief outline of the Hindoo religion, to a consideration of the character and worship of the inferior gods; but cannot omit Kâmadeva [57], the god of love, and Krishna. Kâmadeva, the son of Brahmâ, is represented as a beautiful youth, holding in his hands a bow and arrows of flowers. He is invariably accompanied by his wife *Rati*, the goddess of enjoyment or pleasure, by the cuckoo, the humming bee, and gentle breezes; and is said to be always wandering through the three worlds. On other occasions we find him conversing

[55] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 367.

[56] See above, p. 145, note 4; Ram Mohun Roy, Translation of several texts, &c. of the Vedas, p. 109.

[57] The name of this god is derived from *kâma*, "desire," and *deva*, "a god:" and that of his wife, *Rati*, from the verb *ram*, "to play, or give pleasure." Ward, vol. iii. p. 178. According to Sir William Jones, Kâmadeva is the son of *Mâyâ*, or "the general attracting power;" and the name of his wife Rati signifies affection. Ward, vol. xiii. p. 236.

with his mother and consort, in the midst of his gardens and temples, or riding by moonlight on a parrot or lory, attended by nymphs or dancing girls, the foremost of whom bears his standard, which is a fish painted on a red ground. "His bow of sugar-cane or flowers, with a string of bees, and his five arrows, each pointed with an Indian blossom of a heating quality, are allegories equally new and beautiful[58]." When a wife quits the house of her father to repair to her husband for the first time, prayers are addressed to this god for children and for happiness[59].

Krishna, the most celebrated of the avatars or incarnations of Vishnu, was the son of Devaki by Vasudeva. His birth was concealed through fear of the tyrant Cansa, and he was fostered in Mat'hura, by an honest herdsman, named Nanda, and his wife Yasoda. "In their family were a multitude of young Gopas or cow-herds, and beautiful Gopis or milk-maids, who were his playfellows during his infancy; and in his early youth Krishna selected nine damsels as his favourites, with whom he passed his gay hours in dancing, sporting, and playing on his flute. For the remarkable number of his Gopis I have no authority but a whimsical picture, where nine girls are grouped in the form of an elephant, on which he sits and pipes; and, unfortunately, the word *nava* signifies both nine and new, or young, so that in the following stanza it may admit of two interpretations:—'I bear in my bosom continually that god, who for sportive recreation with a train of nine (young) dairy-maids, dances gracefully, now quick, now slow, on the sands just left by the daughter of the Sun.'

[58] Sir William Jones, Works, vol. xiii. p. 236; Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 255.

[59] Ward, vol. iii. p. 178.

"Both he, and Râma, are described as youths of perfect beauty; but the princesses of Hindoostan, as well as the damsels of Nanda's farm, were passionately in love with Krishna, who continues to this hour the darling god of the Indian women. The sect of Hindoos[60], who adore him with enthusiastic and almost exclusive devotion, have broached a doctrine which they maintain with eagerness, and which seems general in these provinces,—that he was distinct from all the avatars, who had only an *ansa*, or portion of his divinity; while Krishna was the person of Vishnu himself in a human form: hence they consider the third Râma, his elder brother, as the eighth avatar invested with an emanation of his divine radiance; and in the principal Sanscrit dictionary, compiled about two thousand years ago, Krishna, Vasudeva, Govinda, and other names of the shepherd god, are intermixed with epithets of Nârâyana or the divine spirit. All the avatars are painted with gemmed Ethiopian, or Parthian coronets; with rays encircling their heads; jewels in their ears; two necklaces; one straight, and one pendant on their bosoms, with dropping gems; garlands of well-disposed many-coloured flowers, or collars of pearls hanging down before their waists; loose mantles of gold tissue, or dyed silk, embroidered on their hems with flowers, elegantly thrown over one shoulder and folded like ribands across the breast; with bracelets too on one arm, and on each wrist; they are naked to the waist, and uniformly with dark azure flesh, in allusion probably to the tint of that primordial fluid on which Nârâyana moved in the beginning of time; but their skirts are bright yellow, the colour of the

[60] This sect, however, is regarded by Mr. Colebrooke as comparatively modern. Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 494, 495. See also Ward, vol. i. Introd. p. 3, 75; vol. iii. p. 147, 154; and Creuzer, Rel de l'Antiquité, tom. i. p. 220.

curious pericarpium in the centre of the water-lily, where nature, as Dr. Murray observes, in some degree discloses her secrets, each seed containing before it germinates a few perfect leaves; they are sometimes drawn with that flower in one hand, a radiated elliptical ring, used as a missile weapon in a second, the sacred shell, or left-handed buccinum in a third, and a mace or battle-axe in a fourth. But Krishna, when he appears, as he sometimes does appear, among avatars, is more splendidly decorated than any, and wears a rich garland of sylvan flowers, whence he is named Vanamâli, as low as his ancles, which are adorned with strings of pearls. Dark blue, approaching to black, which is the meaning of the word Krishna, is believed to have been his complexion; and hence the large bee of that colour is consecrated to him, and is often drawn fluttering over his head. That azure tint, which approaches to blackness, is peculiar, as we have already remarked, to Vishnu; and hence in the great reservoir, or cistern, at Catmandu, the capital of Nepâl, there is placed in a recumbent posture, a large well-proportioned image of blue marble, representing Nârâyana floating on the waters. But let us return to the actions of Krishna, who was not less heroic than lovely, and when a boy slew the terrible serpent Câliya, with a number of giants and monsters; at a more advanced age he put to death his cruel enemy Cansa, and having taken under his protection the king Yudhisht'hira, and the other Pându s who had been grievously oppressed by the Kurus and their tyrannical chief, he kindled the war described in the great epic poem, entitled the Mahâbhârata, at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his heavenly seat in Vaicont'ha, having left the instructions comprised in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ, with his disconsolate friend Arjuna, whose grandson became sovereign of India[61]."

[61] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 259—262.

About one thousand years before the Christian era[62], an extraordinary man appeared in India, who laboured with unceasing assiduity, and not without success, to reform the popular superstitions, and destroy the influence of the Brahmins. This was Buddha, whom the Brahmins themselves regard as an avatar of Vishnu. The efforts of Buddha were exerted to bring back the religion of his country to its original purity. He was of royal descent, but chose an ascetic life, and embraced the most abstruse system of philosophy prevalent in India. Many princes, among others the celebrated Vikramâditya, who reigned in the century that preceded the commencement of our era, adopted the faith of Buddha, and, as far as their influence extended, obliterated the religion of the Brahmins, and the systems of castes. "It is certain, however, that the learned adherents of the Brahminical religion did not remain silent spectators of what they deemed the triumph of atheism[63]. They contended with their equally learned opponents, and this dispute, as is manifest by the tendency of

[62] The greatest discrepancy of opinion prevails respecting the period at which Buddha lived. Bohlen, in his work on ancient India (Das alte Indien, vol. i. p. 315—317), has collected no less than thirty-five different statements, founded chiefly upon the traditions current among the various nations who have adopted the Buddhist religion. Four of these would fix the age of Buddha at more than two thousand years before the Christian era; the four next make it anterior to the year 1200 B.C.; the following eighteen concur in fixing it between the years 1081 and 1000 B. C.; and the remaining thirteen fluctuate between 959 and 543 B. C.

[63] Sir William Jones, in his Remarks on Mr. Wilkins's translation of a 'Royal Indian Grant, found at Mongher,' observes—"that the Buddhists, or *Saugatas*, are called *Atheists* by the Brahmins, whom they opposed; but it is *mere invective;* and this very grant fully disproves the calumny, by admitting a future state of rewards and punishments. *Sugata*, or Buddha, was a reformer, and every reformer must expect to be calumniated." Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 142.

many of the works still read by the Hindoos, called forth all the talents of both sides; challenges to con duct the controversy in the presence of kings and learned assemblies were given and accepted: but here, as in innumerable other instances, the arm of power prevailed; and as long as the reigning monarchs were Buddhists, the Brahmins were obliged to confine themselves to verbal contentions[64]." At length, about the beginning of the sixth century of our era, an exterminating persecution of the Buddhists began, which was instigated chiefly by Cumarila Bhatta, a fierce antagonist of their doctrine, and a reputed writer on Brahminical theology[65]. This persecution terminated in almost entirely expelling the followers of the Buddhist religion from Hindoostan; but it has doubtless contributed to its propagation in those neighbouring countries, into which it had previously been introduced through the intercourse of commerce and travel[66].

[64] Ward. vol. iii. p. 419, 420. It was at a very late period, however, that Buddhism was finally extirpated from the south of India. The persecution of this sect by the Brahmins was most rancorous. "They were tied hand and foot, and thus thrown into rivers, lakes, ponds, and sometimes whole strings of them." The Buddhists, when it was in their power, retaliated those cruelties upon the Brahmins. They still existed in vast numbers in the Peninsula, in the Gangetic provinces, and in Guzerat, in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries of the Christian era. Asiatic Researches, vol. x. p. 91, 92. Even so late as the year 1526, we find a royal grant of land, the author of which, as Bohlen observes, was evidently a Buddhist. Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 562, 573; Bohlen, De Buddhaismi origine et ætate definiendis tentamen, p. 38—40.—The religion of Buddha was introduced into China about sixty-five years after Christ. De Guignes, Hist. des Huns, tom. v. p. 36.

[65] See Wilson's Preface to the first edition of his Sanscrit Dictionary; Bohlen, Das alte Indien, i. 350, &c.

[66] Those of our readers who may wish for further information about the history and doctrines of Buddhism, we must refer to Hodgson's sketch of Buddhism, in the Transactions of the

The Hindoos being delivered from the austere system of Buddha, were not content with their celestial gods, or heroes, but extended their adoration to various living individuals among their own countrymen. All the Brahmins, but especially the priests, are propitiated with divine honours. Their daughters, also, under eight years of age, are worshipped as forms of the goddess Bhavani, with offerings of flowers, paint, water, garlands, and incense. At certain seasons of the year, the Brahmin is worshipped by his wife. The wives of Brahmins are likewise worshipped by other men, who, when they happen to be affluent, sometimes invite a hundred of these ladies to their houses, and, having repeated hymns of prayer and praise before them, conclude the ceremony with costly offerings. On particular occasions a naked female, as the representation of the goddess Bhavani, is said to be worshipped by the Hindoos[67].

The worship of animals, as the symbols or representatives of certain gods, has from the remotest ages prevailed in Asia. Among the Egyptians the cow was adored as a form of Athor, or the Celestial Venus, a goddess whose mythus and attributes bear a striking analogy to those of the Indian Bhavani, who has selected the same animal for her representative. In fact, it is Bhavani, and not the cow, who is worshipped; though the zeal of the missionaries has led them to

Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii. p. 222—257; to Abel Rémusat's Récherches sur les langues Tatares, Paris, 1820, his Mélanges Asiatiques, 1825, and Nouveaux Mélanges Asiatiques, 1829; to Klaproth's Asia Polyglotta, Paris, 1823, and several essays by the same author in the Journal Asiatique and Nouveau Journal Asiatique; to Burnouf and Lassen's Essai sur le Pali, Paris, 1826; and to Schmidt's Forschungen im Gebiete Mittelasiatischer Geschichte, and his Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen, St. Petersburgh, 1829.

[67] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 192—195.

overlook this circumstance; for, in the rites, she is addressed as the "mother of the gods." This is clearly proved by the whole tenor of the ceremonies. No image is used, nor does the devotee bow down before the animal. A vase, filled with water, is set up in the building, where the cows are stalled, and before this the prayers are recited. At the close of the service the officiating Brahmin reads the *Chandi*, a poem in which the wars of Bhavani are related. On other occasions flowers are thrown at the feet of the cow, and fresh grass is placed before her; and the worshipper, addressing her as the form of the goddess, exclaims—"Eat, O Bhavani!" In the month Phalguna, the milkmen paint the horns and hoofs of their cattle yellow, and bathe them in the river[68]. The bull is propitiated with divine honours, as an incarnation of the soul of a Brahmin[69]. Hanuman, the monkey-god, is regarded as an avatar of Siva, whose dog-steed is likewise supposed to participate in his honours. Bhavani is sometimes worshipped under the form of a jackall, as well as under that of the Coromandel eagle, to which the Hindoos always bow when it passes them. Vishnu is adored under the form of a fish. Serpents, also, as symbols of the destructive principle, are soothed with sacred rites. Various trees are worshipped by the Hindoos as forms of particular gods, more especially by the women, who regard it as a great merit to water their roots during the hot months[70]. Books are regarded as something divine; as are also certain

[68] Ward, vol. iii. p. 196; Jablonski, Pantheon Ægypt. tom. i. p. 6.

[69] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. iii. p. 253, 391.

[70] See in Sacontala that beautiful scene, in which the princess and her fair young friends are introduced performing this sacred rite in the gardens of Canwa. Works of Sir W. Jones, vol. ix. pp. 388—390; Forbes, Orient. Mem. vol. ii. p. 360.

stones, called *sâlagrâma*, from the neighbourhood of the Gundhak river[71].

But among the objects of Hindoo worship rivers have at all times occupied a distinguished place. The Nile, it is well known, has always been regarded as a divinity by the inhabitants of Eastern Africa, though his honours have now dwindled to a single priest, who performs sacred rites at his source[72]. The Ganges, however, and various other great rivers of India, are still ranked among the principal deities of Asia. The Ganges, or rather the nymph Ganga, who is called the daughter of Mount Himavat, is represented as a white woman sitting on a sea animal called *Makara*, with a water-lily in her right hand, and in her left a lute. All tribes and classes of Hindoos pay adoration to Ganga. They select the banks of this river for their worship in preference to all other places, and here, at certain days of the moon, they bathe and offer up their vows and prayers to the gods. On these occasions offerings of fruit, flowers, rice, and sweetmeats are made, and garlands of flowers are suspended across the stream, even where it is very wide. While sitting before his own door, by the side of the Ganges, says Ward, the Hindoo observes crowds daily passing to this river; "coming in sight of it, each one lifts up his hands to it, in the posture of adoration. They descend into it, and mixing therewith a variety of minute ceremonies, perform their ablutions, and seek there the removal of stains which would otherwise accom-

[71] The *sálagráma* is a flinty stone, containing the impression of one or more ammonitæ, conceived by the Hindoos to represent Vishnu. See Haughton's Bengali Dictionary, p. 2484.

[72] See in Bruce an interesting description of this last relic of an almost worn-out superstition. Of the pomp and splendour attending the ancient worship of the Nile, we have an ample account in Jablonski, Pantheon Ægyptiacum, part ii. pp. 139—174.

pany the worshipper into the next birth. On particular occasions, with one glance of his eye, he sees thousands at the same moment in the midst of the sacred stream, in the act of profound adoration, waiting for the propitious moment, the Brahminical signal for immersion. He frequently sees there others attending, with the deepest solicitude, a dying relation, and using the water and the clay of this sacred river, performing offices which acquire in his mind the deepest interest, as the last preparation for the next state of existence. After the death of the individual, he watches these relatives, who having burnt the body, make a channel from the funeral pile to the river, into which they wash the ashes of the body just consumed, that they may mix in the purifying stream. At another time he sees a person bearing a bone, part of the body of a relation, who has had the misfortune to die at a distance from the Ganges, and casting it into the river for the benefit of the deceased. Others pass him carrying on their shoulders in pans, the water of the deified Ganges to the distance of hundreds of miles, that therewith they may perform rites connected, as the worshippers suppose, with their highest interests. The stories to which he listens in his own family, or among the boys and men where he resorts, contain constant allusions to the miraculous powers of this river; he therefore falls down with the rest of his countrymen, and adores a goddess whose waters refresh the living, and bear the dying to a state of bliss[73]."

[73] Ward, vol. i. preface, p. xxxi. xxxii.

Chapter VI.

TEMPLES—HOLY PLACES—PILGRIMAGES—AND FESTIVALS.

There is, perhaps, no country in the world in which so great a number of temples and holy edifices are found as are scattered through the various provinces of India. Almost every grove, and secluded valley, and wild and lofty mountain summit, presents to the eye some picturesque shrine, or antique chapel, entire or in ruins, the offspring of the piety of former days. These temples, when situated in fertile regions, are frequently surrounded by gardens of singular beauty. The Brahmins exhibit remarkable taste and judgment in selecting the site of their sacred buildings. Shade and water are rendered indispensable by the warmth of the climate; and as the dwellings of the gods are generally inhabited by the priests, and the numerous dancing-girls, who chaunt the service and perform before the idol, vegetables, fruit, and flowers are cultivated with much care in the gardens of the temples. The groves, which afford the worshippers a shelter from the noon-day heat, consist of orange, fig, mulberry, and pomegranate trees; and the tanks, which are frequently lined with white marble, often have their beauty enhanced by the number of aquatic birds, and the flowers of the red and blue lotus, which are seen floating upon their surface. Sometimes the temples are situated in the midst of the wildest scenery, surrounded by woods and forests, and almost concealed from observation by thick groves of banian trees. In these sacred groves a number of conse-

crated bulls, after being dedicated with great ceremony by the Brahmins, to Siva, and having a distinguishing mark set upon them, are permitted to wander whither-soever they please, sometimes straying beyond the precincts of the temple among the perfumed grass of the neighbouring meadows, but everywhere welcomed as the representatives of the god. In Guzerat, as well as in some other parts of India, these animals are of extraordinary beauty. "They are perfectly white, with black horns, a skin delicately soft, and eyes rivalling those of the antelope in brilliant lustre." And never was Apis regarded in ancient Egypt with more veneration than is now paid to the bull of Siva in Hindoostan. Besides the living animals there is in most temples a representation of one or more of the race, sculptured in marble, stone, or *petrified rice*, reposing under the banian or peepul trees; for "living or dead they are supposed to add to the sanctity of these holy retreats[1]."

Among the alpine valleys of Mewar, and the wilds of Parassur in Rajast'han, the traveller discovers, as he journeys along, numerous examples of the beautiful sacred architecture of India. The genius of both Jain and Brahmin has here been exerted in ornamenting their native land. "The most antique temples are to be seen in these spots,—within the dark gorge of the mountain, or on its rugged summit,—in the depths of the forest, and at the sources of streams, where sites of seclusion, beauty, and sublimity alternately exalt the mind's devotion. In these regions the creative power appears to have been the earliest, and at one time the sole object of adoration, whose symbols the serpent-wreathed lingam, and its companion the bull, were held sacred even by the 'children of the forest.'" "The temple of Eklinga, situated in one of the narrow defiles leading to the

[1] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 407, 510; iii. p. 99.

capital, is an immense structure, though more sumptuous than elegant. It is built entirely of white marble, most elaborately carved and embellished, but, lying in the route of a bigoted foe, it has undergone many dilapidations. The brazen bull, placed under his own dome, facing the sanctuary of the lingam, is nearly of the natural size, in a recumbent posture. It is cast hollow, of good shape, highly polished, and without flaw, except where the hammer of the Tatar has opened a passage in the hollow flank in search of treasure[2]."

Motives of prudence have united with those derived from superstition in leading men, during barbarous ages, to erect the dwellings of their gods among the fastnesses of the mountains, whose summits, as Herodotus remarks, were among the Orientals sacred to Jupiter. We find Koombho, one of the princes of Mewar, erecting a temple on Mount Aboo, whose pinnacles overtop all the secondary mountains of India. The same prince contributed eighty thousand pounds towards the erection of another temple, one of the largest edifices in the world, which cost upwards of a million sterling, and was completed by subscription. This building stands in the Sadri pass, leading from the western descent of the high lands of Mewar. "It consists of three stories, and is supported by numerous columns of granite, upwards of forty feet in height. The interior is inlaid with mosaics of cornelian and agate. The statues of the Jain saints are in its subterranean vaults." Owing to its secluded situation, which has preserved it from the bigoted fury of the Musulmans, this edifice is still in a high state of preservation, but it is no longer a place of worship, "and its only visitants now are the wild beasts, who take refuge in its sanctuary."

Colonel Tod, in his account of the religious esta-

[2] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 516.

blishments of Mewar, describes as follows the wild scenery by which the ancient temple of Siva, above delineated, is surrounded. "The hills towering around it on all sides are of the primitive formation, and their scarped summits are clustered with honeycombs. There are abundant small springs of water, which keep verdant numerous shrubs, the flowers of which are acceptable to the deity, especially the *kiner*, or oleander, which grows in great luxuriance on the Aravulli. Groves of bamboo and mango were formerly common, according to tradition; but although it is deemed sacrilege to thin the groves of Bâl, the bamboo has been nearly destroyed; there are, however, still many trees sacred to the deity scattered around." The complicated style in which the greater number of Hindoo temples are constructed, renders it difficult, if not impossible, to convey by words a just and clear conception of their various details[3]. "The various orders of Hindoo sacred architecture are distinguished by the form of the *sikhara*, or pinnacle, which is the portion springing from and surmounting the perpendicular walls of the body of the temple. The sikra of those of Siva is invariably pyramidal, and its sides vary with the base, whether square or oblong. The apex is crowned with an ornamental figure, as a sphinx, an urn, a bull, or a lion, which is called the *kullus*. When the sikra is but the frustrum of a pyramid, it is often surmounted by a row of lions, as at Bijolli[4]."

One of the most remarkable temples of India is the shrine of Krishna, denominated *Nât'hdwârâ*, or the "Portal of the God." It is situated on the right

[3] Those who take an interest in the history of architecture will thank us for drawing their attention to the *Essay on the Architecture of the Hindoos*, by Râm Râz, with 48 plates, just published by the Royal Asiatic Society. (London, 1834, 4to.)

[4] Colonel Tod, vol. i. p. 516.

bank of the Bunas river, about twenty-two miles north-east of Oodipoor. This fane, however, owes its celebrity neither to its structure nor situation, but to an image of Krishna, supposed to be the same which has been worshipped in Mat'hura ever since the deification of the hero. Though less renowned, and reputed less holy than the pastoral Vrij, the birth-place of Krishna, where the youthful god sported with the Gopis, and made the groves resound to the echoes of his flute, Nât'hdwârâ is still one of the most frequented places of Hindoo pilgrimage. Yet its consecration dates no farther back than the reign of Aurungzebe, when the Pastoral Divinity was exiled from his ancient classical seat in Vrij, where he had been worshipped during a period of two thousand eight hundred years. At this crisis, when the Mohammedan tyrant had proscribed Krishna, and defiled his shrines on the banks of the Yamuna, the "Holy Land" of the Hindoo, Rana Raj Singh, prince of Mewar, offered the heads of one hundred thousand Rajpoots for the service of the god, together with a sacred asylum in his dominions. "An omen decided the spot of his future residence. As he journied to gain the capital of the Seesodias, the chariot wheel sunk deep into the earth and defied extrication; upon which the augur interpreted the pleasure of the god, that he desired to dwell there. This circumstance occurred at an inconsiderable village called Siarh, in the fief of Dailwara, one of the sixteen nobles of Mewar. Rejoiced at this decided manifestation of favour, the chief hastened to make a perpetual gift of the village and its lands, which was speedily confirmed by the patent of the Rana." Upon this the god was removed from his car, a temple quickly arose for his reception, and the hamlet was gradually transformed into a considerable town, whose inhabitants are under the

jurisdiction of no tribunal but that of the god. "The site is not uninteresting, nor devoid of the means of defence. To the east it is shut in by a cluster of hills, and to the westward flows the Bunas, which nearly bathes the extreme points of the hills. Within these bounds is the sanctuary of Krishna, where the criminal is free from pursuit; nor dare the rod of justice appear on the mount, or the foot of the pursuer pass the stream; neither within it can blood be spilt, for the pastoral Krishna delights not in offerings of this kind. The territory contains within its precincts abundant space for the town, the temple, and the establishments of the priests, as well as for the numerous resident worshippers, and the constant influx of votaries from the most distant regions,—

> 'From Samarcand, by Oxus, Temir's throne,
> Down to the Golden Chersonese,'

who find abundant shelter from the noon-tide blaze in the groves of tamarind, peepul (*Ficus religiosa*), and semul (*Bombax heptaphyllum*), or cotton-tree, which grows to an immense height, where they listen to the mystic hymns of Jayadeva. Here those whom ambition has cloyed, superstition unsettled, satiety disgusted, commerce ruined, or crime disquieted, may be found as ascetic attendants on the mildest of the gods of India. Determined upon renouncing the world, they first renounce the ties that bind them to it, whether family, friends, or fortune, and placing their wealth at the disposal of the deity, stipulate only for a portion of the food dressed for him, and to be permitted to prostrate themselves before him, till their allotted time is expired. Here no blood-stained sacrifice scares the timid devotee; no austerities terrify or tedious ceremonies fatigue him; he is taught to cherish the hope

that he has only to ask for mercy in order to obtain it; and to believe that the compassionate deity who guarded the lapwing's nest in the midst of myriads of combatants, who gave beatitude to the courtezan who as the wall crushed her pronounced the name of Râma, will not withhold it from him who has quitted the world and its allurements that he may live only in his presence, be fed with the food prepared for himself, and yield up his last sigh invoking the name of Heri[5]."

Two hundred votaries, of every rank and condition, have been here congregated together at one time, to pass their lives in a devotion which, however mistaken, appears to be sincere. These men, holding life "unstable as the dew-drop on the lotus," bestow their whole possessions on the shrine, in the hope that, through the intercessional prayers of the high priest, and days and years spent in religious meditation, they may at length lay down the burden of their cares in the heaven of their deity. Towards this shrine a tide of costly offerings from every point of the compass is constantly setting in. The votaries of Krishna are numerous and widely spread. From the banks of the Indus and the Ganges, from the coasts of the Peninsula, and the shores of the Red Sea, gifts and legacies find their way to Nât'hdwârâ. Krishna, or, as he is here more popularly termed, *Caniya*, is the Saint Nicholas of the Hindoo navigator, as was Apollo to the Grecian and Celtic sailors, who purchased the charmed arrows of the god as a protection from the tempest; and among the mariners who plough the Indian Ocean from Sofala or Arabia, it is customary, when the aspect of the heavens appears menacing or dubious, to vow certain offerings, more or less costly, according to the ability of the devotee, to the temple of his patron god. There is no donation, says Colonel Tod, too great or too trifling

[5] See Colonel Tod's Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 521—538.

for the acceptance of Krishna, from the baronial estate to a patch of meadow-land; from the gemmed coronet to adorn his image to the widow's mite; nor is there a principality in India which does not diminish its own revenues to increase those of Nât'h-dwârâ. It is clearly inferrible, from the account of this able and enthusiastic writer, that the introduction of this milder form of superstition into Rajast'han has caused a falling off among the worshippers of Siva, the tutelar divinity of the Rajpoots, whose altars, as we have elsewhere observed, are among the most ancient in Hindoostan.

Upon the right of sanctuary, which existed among the majority of ancient nations, we shall merely remark that, although humanity was the original cause of its institution, the sanctuaries seem to have almost everywhere quickly degenerated into strongholds of desperate criminals. It is not a little singular, however, that in a country where confusion and anarchy have prevailed so long as they have in India, the abuse of the right of sanctuary should not be more common than we find it; but we have the unexceptionable testimony of Colonel Tod in support of the assertion that the towns of Caniya have not often been guilty of this offence.

Herodotus has given us an account of the splendid offerings which were poured into the shrines of Delphi and Delos; but the votaries of the Krishna of Mewar, if less numerous than those of the Grecian deity, are far more widely scattered over the various regions of the East. Hither are borne "the spices of the isles of the Indian Archipelago; the balmy spoils of Araby the blest; the nard or frankincense of Tartary; the raisins and pistachios of Persia; every variety of saccharine preparation, from the *sacar-cand*, 'sugar-candy,' of the Celestial Empire, with which the god sweetens his evening repast, to that

more common sort which enters into the *peras* of Mat'hura, the food of his infancy; the shawls of Cashmere, the silks of Bengal, the scarfs of Benares, the brocades of Guzerat,

————————— 'the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound.' [6] "

But it is the maritime provinces which most lavishly contribute to the riches of this renowned shrine. Comptrollers, deputed by the high-priest, constantly reside in the great commercial cities of Surat, Cambay, Muscat, Mandavi, and others along the coast, to collect and transmit the benefactions of the votaries. The sum of ten thousand rupees is usually sent every year from the Arabian sea-ports of Muscat, Mokha, and Jidda, by the Hindoo merchants whom commerce has attracted to those cities. Even from the mouths of the Volga, where a mercantile Hindoo colony is established, and from the rude hut of the Samoyede of Siberia, contributions flow into the fane of Krishna. In Mooltan a deputy of the high-priest is stationed for the purpose of investing the distant worshippers with the initiative cordon and necklace. Numerous pilgrims from Samarcand come loaded with offerings to the god; and there is not, in fact, a follower of Vishnu, however humble his calling, or remote his dwelling-place, who does not in person, or by deputy, convey the tenth of his possessions to the shrine of Nât'hdwârâ, whither caravans of thirty or forty cars, double-yoked, pass twice or three times in the year by the upper road. These pious offerings, however, are not suffered to lie useless. The apparel is liberally distributed among the devotees, and the various articles of food are judiciously supplied to their daily support. To stimulate the zeal of the votaries the agents of the

[6] Tod's Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 528.

high-priest carry a portion of the sacred food to the most distant regions, to be bestowed upon the bountiful, as from the god, together with dresses of honour corresponding in material and value with the rank of the receiver: a diadem or fillet of satin and gold, embroidered; a quilted coat of gold or silver brocade for the cold weather; a scarf of blue and gold; or if to one who prizes the gift less for its intrinsic worth than as a mark of special favour, a fragment of the garland worn at some festival by the god; or a simple necklace, by which he is received into the number of the elect. But it is the profusion of the Rajpoot princes that has chiefly enriched the shrine of Krishna. The contribution of the Rajah of Cotah alone amounts to twelve thousand pounds annually. In fact, every thing at Cotah belongs to the god, as does likewise the great lake to the east of the city, with all the fish which it contains[7].

The temple of Nât'hdwârâ, as we have already observed, owes no part of its celebrity to the taste or magnificence of its architecture; many other sacred edifices in India, to which the pious attach peculiar sanctity, as the shrine of Jagannât'h in Orissa, are no less insignificant, considered as works of art; and from this circumstance able writers seem to have concluded that all Hindoo temples are mean structures, utterly destitute of elegance and proportion. A slight acquaintance with history will suffice to show the feebleness of this reasoning. Among the Egyptians the most sacred idols were small rude images resembling pygmies, or those coarse figures with which

[7] "I had one day," says Colonel Tod, "thrown my net into this lake, which abounded with a variety of fish, when my pastime was interrupted by a message from the Regent, Zalim Singh. 'Tell Captain Tod that Cotah and all around it are at his disposal; but these fish belong to Caniya.' I, of course, immediately desisted, and the fish were returned to the safeguard of the deity." Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 530, note.

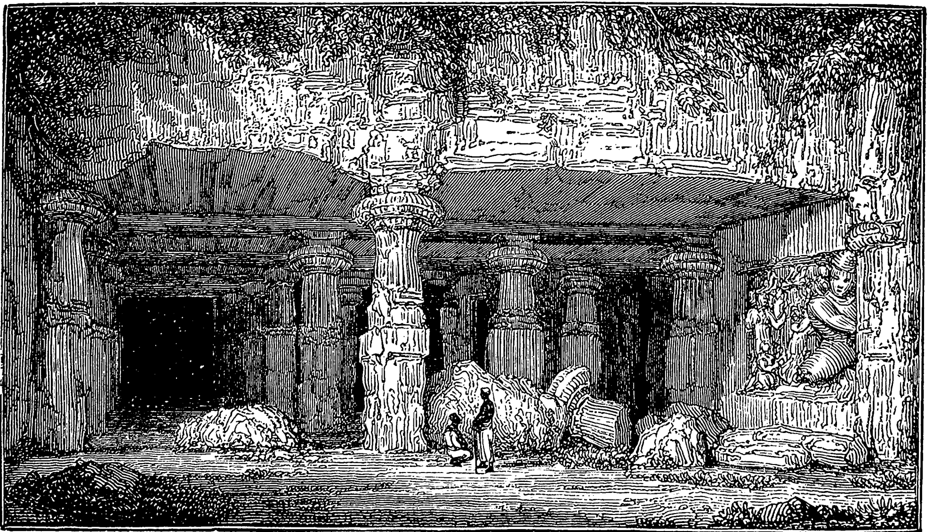
the Phœnicians used to ornament the prows of their galleys. Even in Athens, where all the fine arts had acquired a degree of perfection which modern nations have hitherto in vain sought to rival, the Hermæ, the breaking of which by Alcibiades was regarded as an action of most heinous impiety, were ordinary figures of no merit or value, as productions of art. We need not, therefore, be surprised to find among the Hindoos, whom no sane person has ever placed upon a level with the Athenians, a want of architectural elegance in the most holy of their structures, those buildings not being valued for the harmony of their proportions, or the splendour of their materials, but on account of their containing some antique relics, possessing, in the imagination of the people, a mysterious power of removing or remitting the penalty of sin.

However, the temples of India are not, by any means, so entirely devoid of merit as some authors pretend. A certain air of barbaric grandeur, vastness, and exuberant richness of decoration, united, as in our most beautiful Gothic cathedrals, with a remarkable simplicity of design, produce in the beholder a strong feeling of the sublime. There would seem, therefore, to be more ways than one of agitating the most powerful passions of the soul; and although the judgment and the feelings must undoubtedly concur in giving the preference to those creations of art which at once delight and overawe the imagination, we cannot justly refuse to acknowledge the genius of those more irregular and daring fancies whose productions invincibly command our surprise and admiration. The attention of the world has already been directed by many distinguished writers to the cavern-temples of Gaya, Salsette, Elephanta, and Ellora. Conjecture, which when proper data are wanting is always active, has successively as-

signed them the strangest and most improbable origin, sometimes asserting them to be the work of the Egyptians, at other times of the Macedonians, and lastly, to crown the absurdity, of the Jews. At present, however, they are no longer doubted to have been the work of the Hindoos; but, this being acknowledged, it is attempted to be shown that there is nothing very extraordinary in their construction. Speaking of the cavern-temple of Elephanta, in the neighbourhood of Bombay, "it is," says a distinguished contemporary writer, "a cavity in the side of a mountain, about half way between its base and summit, of the space of nearly one hundred and twenty feet square. Pieces of the rock, as is usual in mining, have been left at certain distances supporting the superincumbent matter; and the sight of the whole, upon the entrance, is grand and striking[8]."

Let us, however, inquire in what light the cavern-temple of Elephanta has appeared to the most judicious travellers who have visited and described it. The situation, it must be owned, was selected with some judgment. "The path leading to it lies through a valley; the hills on either side are beautifully clothed, and, except when interrupted by the dove calling to her absent mate, a solemn stillness prevails: the mind is fitted for contemplating the approaching scene. The cave is formed in a hill of stone; its massy roof is supported by rows of columns regularly disposed, but of an order different from any in use with us; gigantic figures in relief are observed on the walls; these, as well as the columns, are shaped in the solid rock, and by artists, it would appear, possessed of some ability, unquestionably of astonish-

[8] Mill, History of British India, vol. ii. p. 4. Few persons are more competent than Mr. Mill to decide in a matter of this kind; yet we think his description calculated to convey too unfavourable an idea of the temple of Elephanta.



Page 191. Entrance of the Temple at Elephanta.

ing perseverance." The author, whose minute and excellent description is much too long to be here cited, mentions among the sculptures the beautiful figure of a youth, and, in another group, a male "leading a female towards a majestic figure seated in the corner of the niche, his head covered like our judges on the bench; the countenance and attitude of the female highly expressive of modesty and a timid reluctance." Farther on he adds, "the part of this surprising monument of human skill and perseverance, hitherto described, is generally called the Great Cave; its length is one hundred and thirty-five feet, and its breadth nearly the same." And, again returning to the sculpture, "gigantic as the figures are," he says, "the mind is not disagreeably moved on viewing in them a certain indication of the harmony of the proportions. Having measured three or four, and examined the proportions by the scale we allow the most correct, I found many stood even this test, while the disagreements were not equal to what are met with every day in people whom we think by no means ill-proportioned[9]." Another traveller, who has left us an entertaining account of Western India, observes that "the principal temple and adjoining apartments are two hundred and twenty feet long, and one hundred and fifty broad; in these dimensions exceeding the largest work at Salsette; but being very inferior in height, notwithstanding the numerous and richer decorations at Elephanta, the spectator is constantly reminded of being in a cave. At Salsette, the lofty concave roof and noble columns have a majestic appearance: yet the observer feels more surprise and admiration at Elephanta than at Salsette: he beholds four rows of massive columns cut out of the solid rock, uniform in their order, and placed at regular distances, so as to form three mag-

[9] Goldingham, Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 424—434.

nificent avenues from the principal entrance to the grand idol, which terminates the middle vista; the general effect being heightened by the blueness of the light, or rather gloom, peculiar to the situation. The central image is composed of three colossal heads, reaching nearly from the floor to the roof, a height of fifteen feet[10]."

To these let us add the testimony of the tasteful, learned, and accomplished Heber, and our proof of the grandeur and magnificence of this cavern-temple will be complete. "Two-thirds of the ascent up the higher of the two hills," he says, "is the great cavern, in a magnificent situation, and deserving all the praise which has been lavished on it." For the details he refers to another author, and then adds:— "Though my expectations were highly raised, the reality much exceeded them, and both the dimensions, the proportions, and the sculpture seemed to me to be of a much more noble character, and a more elegant execution than I had been led to suppose. Even the statues are executed with great spirit, and are some of them of no common beauty, considering their dilapidated condition and the coarseness of their material[11]."

Of the cave-temples of Kennery, in the island of Salsette, the same excellent authority observes:— "These are, certainly, in every way remarkable from their number, their beautiful situation, their elaborate carving, and their marked connection with Buddha and his religion. The caves are scattered over two sides of a high rocky hill, at many different elevations, and of various sizes and forms. Most of them appear to have been places of habitation for monks or hermits. One very beautiful apartment, of a square form, its walls covered with sculpture, and

[10] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 429, 430.
[11] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 79, 80.

surrounded internally by a broad stone bench, is called 'the durbar,' but I should rather guess had been a school. Many have deep and well carved cisterns attached to them, which, even in this dry season (May), were well supplied with water. The largest and most remarkable of all is a Buddhist temple, of great beauty and majesty, and which even in its present state would make a very stately and convenient place of Christian worship. It is entered through a fine and lofty portico, having on its front, but a little to the left hand, a high detached octagonal pillar, surmounted by three lions seated back to back. On each side of the portico is a colossal statue of Buddha, with his hands raised in the attitude of benediction, and the screen which separates the vestibule from the temple is covered, immediately above the dodo, with a row of male and female figures, nearly naked, but not indecent, and carved with considerable spirit, which apparently represent dancers...... In the centre of the semicircle, and with a free walk all round it, is a mass of rock left solid, but carved externally like a dome, and so as to bear a strong general likeness to our Saviour's sepulchre, as it is now chiselled away and enclosed in St. Helena's Church at Jerusalem. On the top of the dome is a sort of spreading ornament, like the capital of a column. It is, apparently, intended to support something, and I was afterwards told at Carli, where such an ornament, but of greater size, is likewise found, that a large gilt umbrella used to spring from it. This solid dome appears to be the usual symbol of Buddhist adoration, and, with its umbrella ornament, may be traced in the Shoo-Madoo of Pegu, and other more remote structures of the same faith. Though it is different in its form and style of ornament from the Lingam, I cannot help thinking it has been originally intended to represent the same popular object of that almost

universal idolatry. The ceiling of this cave is arched semicircularly, and ornamented, in a very singular manner, with slender ribs of teak wood of the same curve with the roof, and disposed as if they were supporting it, which, however, it does not require, nor are they strong enough to answer the purpose. Their use may have been to hang lamps or flowers from in solemn rejoicings[12]."

Let us now, to pursue the subject of cavern-temples, accompany to Carli this judicious traveller, than whom we could not desire a more competent guide. Here "the celebrated cavern," he observes, "is hewn on the face of a precipice about two-thirds up the side of a steep hill, rising with a very scarped and regular *talus*, to the height of, probably, eight hundred feet above the plain. The excavations consist, beside the principal temple, of many smaller apartments, and galleries, in two stories, some of them ornamented with great beauty, and evidently intended, like those at Kennery, for the lodging of monks or hermits. The temple itself is on the same general plan as that of Kennery, but half as large again, and far finer and richer. It is approached by a steep and narrow path winding up the side of the hill, among trees and brushwood, and fragments of rock. This brought us to a mean and ruinous temple of Siva, which serves as a sort of gateway to the cave: a similar small building stands on the right hand of its portico. . . . . . The approach to the temple is, like that of Kennery, under a noble arch, filled up with a sort of portico screen, in two stories of three intercolumniations below, and five above. In the front, but a little to the left, is the same kind of pillar as is seen at Kennery, though of larger dimensions, surmounted by three lions back to back. Within the portico, to the right and left, are three colossal

[12] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 92—95.

figures, in *alto relievo*, of elephants, their faces looking towards the person who arrives in the portico, and their heads, tusks, and trunks very boldly projecting from the wall. On each of them is a *mohout* very well carved, and a howdah with two persons seated in it. The internal screen on each side of the door is covered as at Kennery with *alto relievos*, very bold and somewhat larger than life, of naked male and female figures. I asked our young guides what deities these represented, and was surprised to hear from them in answer, 'These are not gods, one god is sufficient, these are viragees' (religious enthusiasts, or attendants on the deity). On asking, however, if their god was the same whom they worshipped in the little temple before the steps, and if he were Maha Deo, they answered in the affirmative, so that their deism merely extended to paying worship to a single idol only. There is certainly, however, no image either of Buddha or any other mythological personage about this cavern, nor any visible object of devotion, except the mystic chettah, or umbrella, already mentioned at Kennery. The details of the cave within, having been already more than once published, and as in its general arrangement it closely answers to Kennery, I will only observe that both in dimensions and execution it is much nobler and more elaborate; and that the capitals of the columns (all of them at least which are not hidden by the chettah at the east end) are very singular and beautiful. Each consists of a large cap, like a bell, finely carved, and surmounted by two elephants with their trunks entwined and each carrying two male and one female figure, which our guides again told us were viragees. The timber ribs which decorate the roof, whatever their use may have been, are very perfect and have a good effect in the perspective of the interior, which is all extremely clean, and in

good repair, and would be, in fact, a very noble temple for any religion [13]."

But among the cavern-temples of India the most remarkable, perhaps, both for the style of execution and the historical associations connected with them, are those of Ellora, situated near the ancient Hindoo capital of Deoghir, or Tagara, in the province of Aurungabad. Hamilton [14] justly remarks, that without the aid of numerous plates it would be impossible to render a minute description of these excavations intelligible. But, however richly illustrated, a laborious delineation of architectural details can possess but few charms for the general reader, and might not, in the present case, repay the labour, by any light which it could throw on the religious antiquities of Buddhists or Brahmins. The excavations, which have, with apparent propriety, been divided into Jain, Buddhist, and Brahminical, are situated in the face of a crescent-shaped hill, about a mile from the little rural village of Ellora. "The first view of this desolate religious city," says Mr. Erskine, "is grand and striking, but melancholy. The number and magnificence of the subterraneous temples, the extent and loftiness of some, the endless diversity of sculpture in others, the variety of curious foliage, of minute tracery, highly wrought pillars, rich mythological designs, sacred shrines and colossal statues astonish but distract the mind. From their number and diversity, it is impossible to form any idea of the whole; and the first impressions only give way to a wonder not less natural, that such prodigious efforts of labour and skill should remain, from times certainly not barbarous, without a trace to tell us the hand by which they were designed, or the populous and powerful nation by which they were completed. The empire,

[13] Heber's Journal, &c. vol. iii. p. 112, 113.
[14] Description of India, vol. ii. p. 148, 149.

whose pride they must have been, has passed away, and left not a memorial behind it. The religion to which we owe one part of them, indeed, continues to exist; but that which called into existence the other, like the beings by whose toil it was wrought, has been swept from the land."

One of these groups of caves which, in contempt, is termed by the Brahmins *Dehr Warra*, or "the Halâlkhors'[15] Quarter," has during the rains a very picturesque appearance. The large excavation, according to Sir Charles Malet, is very spacious and handsome, and over the front of it there must rush a small river, during the rainy season, into the plain below, forming a sheet of water, which, in a beautiful cascade, covers the façade of the temple as with a curtain of crystal. There are two benches of stone that run parallel to each other along the floor, from the entrance, the whole depth of the cave, the prospect from which, of the great tank, town, and valley of Ellora, is beautiful. These benches appear to have been intended, as in what is called "the Durbar" at Kennery, as seats either for students, scribes, or the sellers of certain commodities, a convenient passage lying between them up to the idol at the end of the cave[16].

[15] The *Halâlkhors* (i. e. literally, those to whom every thing is lawful food) are the lowest tribe of outcasts. Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 136.

[16] Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 423. The reader, desirous of studying the details of these extraordinary caverns, may consult the elaborate description of Sir C. Malet. Ib. p. 382—423; Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society, articles ix. and xv.; Fitzclarence's Journal of a Route across India, p. 193—213; Seely, the Wonders of Ellora, Lond. 1824; Daniell's Picturesque Voyage to India, Lond. 1810; Langlès, Monumens anciens et modernes de l'Inde, en 150 planches, Paris, 1813; Transact. of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii. p. 326, &c. In the 'Modern Traveller,' an unpretending but clever compilation, the contributions of various authorities have been abridged with much pains. India, vol. iv. p. 287—305.

Of the Buddhist cave-temple near Buddha-Gaya, in Bahar, no very minute or elaborate description exists. The hill in which it is hewn lies about fourteen miles from Gaya, and appears to be one entire mass of granite, rough, craggy, and precipitous in its ascent. "The cave is situated on the southern declivity, about two-thirds from the summit: a tree immediately before it prevents its being seen from the bottom. It has only one narrow entrance from the south, two feet and a half in breadth, and six feet high, and of thickness exactly equal. This leads to a room of an oval form, with a vaulted roof, which I measured twice, and found to be forty-four feet in length from east to west, eighteen feet and a half in breadth, and ten feet and a quarter in height at the centre. This immense cavity is dug entirely out of the solid rock, and is exceedingly well polished, but without any ornament. The same stone extends much farther than the excavated part, on each side of it, and is altogether I imagine full an hundred feet in length[17]."

Of all these cavern-temples, by far the greater number bear evident marks of having been originally consecrated to the worship of Siva, and his consort

Anquetil Duperron has left us an elaborate description of the excavations in his Preliminary Discourse to the Zend Avesta, tom. i. p. 233—249.

[17] J. H. Harington, Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 276—278. Of the antiquity or history of this cavern nothing is known. Dr. Francis Buchanan Hamilton, who has given a description of Buddha Gaya in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, (vol. ii. p. 40—51,) thinks it probable that part of the ruins may be as ancient as the local tradition would make them, viz., coeval with the age of Buddha; but that the great edifice still existing, though in the last stage of decay, is of far more recent date, and perhaps not older than the tenth century of the Christian era. A Sanscrit inscription found at Gaya has been translated by Sir Charles Wilkins. See Asiatic Researches, i. 278—285.

Bhavani; whose symbols, the Yoni, the Lingam, and the Bull, occupy the sanctuary of the edifice, or are at least discernible among its principal ornaments. Sivaism, as we have already shown, is one of the most ancient forms of the Hindoo religion, and in very remote ages was the almost universal creed. Those were its flourishing times. Then it was that the most powerful sovereigns, animated by that zeal which seldom fails to glow in the bosoms of the members of a newly established religion, expended prodigious sums, to the impoverishing of their treasuries, and the great detriment of their people, in the constructing and adorning of the shrines of their patron deity. In process of time this enthusiastic impulse would naturally die away, and cease to produce those stupendous effects which flowed from its youthful, and, if the expression may be hazarded, virgin efforts. These considerations, independently of any others, would, in the absence of positive proof to the contrary, lead us to attribute a very high antiquity to the great majority of excavated temples in India. The arguments of those who advocate the contrary opinion appear to us, we must confess, to have little or no weight, except what they derive from the personal character of those who have advanced them. However this may be, there are, as has already been shown, other Indian sects who have excavated their temples in the solid rock, as the Buddhists and the Jains. But among men whose opinions are deeply tinged with gloom, and whose habits and practices are imbued with a monastic severity, the prevalence of such a taste is not very surprising. The wonder is to behold the followers of the joyous Krishna, whose festivals are enlivened by the sound of the flute, tabors, cymbals, and songs of gladness, immure themselves in sombre mountain caverns, deprived of every cheering sight. Yet it is clear that Krishna was, in ancient

times, worshipped chiefly in caves, of which those of Girdhana in Vrij, of Gopi-nât'h on the shores of Saurashtra, and of Jalindra on the Indus, were the most renowned[18].

Among the most beautiful of the shrines of India is that which the Jains, who have been termed the Deists of Hindoostan, though they do not, perhaps, strictly speaking, deserve the distinction, have erected to the Supreme God in the mountain-city of Comulmere in Rajast'han. "The design of this temple is truly classic. It consists only of the sanctuary, which has a vaulted dome and colonnaded portico all round. The architecture is undoubtedly Jain, which is as distinct in character from the Brahminical as their religion. There is a chasteness and simplicity in this specimen of monotheistic worship, affording a wide contrast to the elaborately sculptured shrines of the Saivas and other polytheists of India. The extreme want of decoration best attests its antiquity, entitling us to attribute it to that period when Sumpriti Raja, of the family of Chandragupta, was paramount sovereign over all these regions (two hundred years before Christ); to whom tradition ascribes the most ancient monuments of this faith, yet existing in Rajast'han and Saurashtra. The proportions and forms of the columns are especially distinct from the other temples, being slight and tapering instead of massive, the general characteristic of Hindoo architecture; while the projecting cornices, which would absolutely deform shafts less light, are peculiarly indicative of the Takshac architect. Sumpriti was the fourth prince in descent from Chandragupta, of the Jain faith, and the ally of Seleucus, the Grecian sovereign of Bactriana. The fragments of

[18] To these Colonel Tod adds those of Gaya in Bahar, but those appear to have belonged exclusively to Buddha. Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 544.

Megasthenes, ambassador from Seleucus, record that this alliance was most intimate; that the daughter of the Rajpoot king was married to Seleucus, who in return for elephants and other gifts, sent a body of Greek soldiers to serve Chandragupta. It is curious to contemplate the possibility, nay the probability, that the Jain temple now before the reader may have been designed by Grecian artists, or that the taste of the artists among the Rajpoots may have been modelled after the Grecian[19]."

No sect of Hindoos have exhibited so much architectural genius as the Jains. Everywhere, at least so far as our experience extends, where their comparatively pure religion has prevailed, monuments of simple grandeur, or of elaborate elegance, have remained, a testimony of their proficiency in the arts. At Benares, indeed, in the midst of shrines and temples of remarkable beauty, the sacred building of the Jains has little to distinguish it beyond the diminutive gilt cupola by which the roof is surmounted; but the Brahmins are here so powerful, and their enemies, for such are the Jains, so much

[19] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 670, 671. "There was," says this author, "another sacred structure in its vicinity, likewise Jain, but of a distinct character; indeed, offering a perfect contrast to that described. It was three stories in height; each tier was decorated with numerous massive low columns, resting on a sculptured panelled parapet, and sustaining the roof of each story, which being very low, admitted but a broken light to chase the pervading gloom. I should imagine that the sacred architects of the East had studied effect equally with the preservers of learning and the arts in the dark period of Europe, when those monuments, which must ever be her pride, arose on the ruins of paganism. How far the Saxon or Scandinavian pagan contributed to the general design of such structures may be doubted; but that their decorations, particularly the grotesque, have a powerful resemblance to the most ancient Hindoo-Scythic, there is no question." p. 671.

at their mercy, that it is more surprising they should possess any place of worship at all, than that it should be destitute of magnificence. Wherever this sect, free from the apprehension of persecution, have deemed it prudent to indulge their natural taste, the case is different. Even in the small obscure town of Mouzabad in Rajpootana, Bishop Heber found their temple richly sculptured, with a beautifully carved dome, and three lofty pyramids of carved stone, springing from the roof[20]. At Calingera, a small village between Neemuch and Baroda, the same traveller observed the most spacious and elegant structure of the kind which he had anywhere seen in India. It was entered by a projecting portico, which led to an open vestibule covered by a dome. Numerous domes and pyramids, surmounting as many small chapels or sanctuaries, adorned the roof, and along its several fronts ran elegantly carved verandahs, supported by slender columns. "The domes are admirably constructed, and the execution of the whole building greatly superior to what I should have expected to find in such a situation. Its splendour of architecture, and its present deserted condition, were accounted for by the Thannadar, from the fact that Calingera had been a place of much traffic, and the residence of many rich traders of the Jain sect[21]."

At the city of Cairah, in Guzerat, there is a Jain temple, which, though distinguished by its striking façade, depressed domes, and pyramidal sikharas, is chiefly rendered remarkable by a piece of curious mechanism which it contains. "Near the centre of the town are a large Jain temple and school, the former consisting of many small apartments up and down stairs, and even under ground, with a good

[20] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 429, 430.

[21] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 529.

deal of gaudy ornament, and some very beautiful carving in a dark wood like oak. In one of the upper rooms is a piece of mechanism, something like those moving clockwork groups of kings, armies, gods and goddesses, which are occasionally carried about our own country by Italians and Frenchmen, in which sundry divinities dance and salam with a sort of musical accompaniment. These figures are made chiefly of the same black wood which I have described. What they last showed us was a cellar under ground, approached by a very narrow passage, and containing on an altar of the usual construction, the four statues of sitting men, which are the most frequent and peculiar objects of Jain idolatry. They are of white marble, but had (as seems to have been the case with many of the images of ancient Greece) their eyes of silver, which gleamed in a very dismal and ghostly manner in the light of a solitary lamp which was burning before them, aided by a yet dimmer ray which penetrated from above through two narrow apertures, like flues in the vaulting. We were very civilly conducted over the whole of the building by one of the junior priests, the senior pundit of the place remaining, as if absorbed in heavenly things, immoveable and silent during the whole of our stay. While I was in the temple a good many worshippers entered, chiefly women, each of whom, first touching one of the bells which hung from the roof, bent to the ground before one or other of the idols, depositing, in some instances, flowers or sugar-candy before it[22]."

But these provincial temples, compared with those of the capitals of Western India, are no more than so many village churches placed in juxta-position

[22] Heber's Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India, vol. i. p. 386; ii. 430, 526—530; iii. 48, 49.

with Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's. The bigotry of the Patans and Moguls, whom Colonel Tod very properly denominates "the Goths and Vandals of Rajast'han," has deprived the lovers of the fine arts in Hindoostan of many a beautiful "relic of nobler days and noblest arts;" but a few exquisite structures have survived their indiscriminating rage, and of these one of the most perfect, as well as one of the most ancient specimens is found in the city of Ajmere. This noble monument of Hindoo architecture stands on the western declivity of the fortress. It is termed by the natives, "the shed of two and a half days," for they imagine it to have been the work of magic, and to have been completed within that time. "The temple is surrounded by a superb screen of Saracenic architecture, having the main front and gateway to the north. From its simplicity, as well as its appearance of antiquity, I am inclined to assign the screen to the first dynasty, the Ghorian sultans, who evidently employed native architects. The entrance arch is of that wavy kind, characteristic of what is termed the Saracenic, whether the term be applied to the Alhambra of Spain, or the Mosques of Delhi; and I am disposed, on close examination, to pronounce it Hindoo. The entire façade of this noble entrance is covered with Arabic inscriptions. But unless my eyes much deceived me, the small frieze over the apex of the arch contained an inscription in Sanscrit, with which Arabic has been commingled, both being unintelligible. The remains of a minaret still maintain their position on the right flank of the *muezzin* to call the faithful to prayers. A line of gate, with a door and steps leading to it for the smaller arches of similar form, composes the front of the screen. The design is chaste and beautiful, and the material, which is a compact limestone of a yellow colour, admitting almost of as high a polish as the

jaune antique, gave abundant scope to the sculptor. After confessing and admiring the taste of the Vandal architect, we passed under the arch to examine the more noble production of the Hindoo. Its plan is simple, and consonant with the more ancient temples of the Jains. It is an extensive saloon, the ceiling supported by a quadruple range of columns, those of the centre being surmounted by a range of vaulted coverings; while the lateral portion, which is flat, is divided into compartments of the most elaborate sculpture. But the columns are most worthy of attention; they are unique in design, and with the exception of the cave-temples, probably among the oldest now existing in India. On examining them, ideas entirely novel, even in Hindoo art, are developed. Like all these portions of Hindoo architecture, their ornaments are very complex, and the observer will not fail to be struck with their dissimilarity: it was evidently a rule in the art to make the ornaments of every part unlike the other, and which I have seen carried to a great extent. There may be forty columns, but no two alike. The ornaments of the base are peculiar, both as to form and execution; the lozenges, with the rich tracery surmounting them, might be transferred, not inappropriately to the Gothic cathedrals of Europe. The projections from various parts of the shaft, (which, on a small scale, may be compared to the corresponding projections of the columns in the *duomo* at Milan,) with the small niches still containing the statues, though occasionally mutilated, of the pontiffs of the Jains, give them a character which strengthens the comparison, and which would be yet more apparent, if we could afford to engrave the details. The elegant Camacumpa, the emblem of the Hindoo Ceres, with its pendant palmyra-branches, is here lost, as are many emblematical ornaments, curious

in design, and elegant in their execution. Here and there occurs a richly carved corbeille, which still farther sustains the analogy between the two systems of architecture; and the capitals are at once strong and delicate; the central vault, which is the largest, is constructed after the same fashion as that described at Nadole; but the concentric annulets which in that are plain, in this are one blaze of ornaments, which, with the whole of the ceiling, is too elaborate and complicated for description. Under the most retired of the compartments, and nearly about the centre, is raised the mumba, or pulpit, whence the Moollah enunciates the dogma of Mohammed, 'there is but one God:' and from which he dispossessed the Jain, whose creed was like his own, the unity of the Godhead. But this is in unison with the feeling which dictated the external metamorphosis[23]."

Besides the temples, there are in India various other places which are accounted holy, in some of which shrines are erected, and in others not. The founders of the Hindoo religion have taught that the performance of religious rites at these sacred places is an act of peculiar merit, productive of great spiritual benefit. Among the spots thus distinguished for their sanctity are the source and confluence of sacred rivers; places where any remarkable phenomena of nature have been discovered; or where certain mysterious images have been set up by the gods themselves; or where some god or saint has resided, or performed some extraordinary act of piety. To these sacred scenes vast multitudes of pilgrims, urged by various motives, continually resort. Of these, many reside there for a time, in the hope of imbibing a sort of odour of sanctity which shall shed its influence over all the actions of their remaining

[23] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 779, 780.

life. Others who have devoted the prime of their days to Mammon, retire thither when the lamp of life begins to burn low, that they may thus make sure of heaven after death. And as opulent sinners used in the barbarous ages of Europe to erect churches or monasteries in order to quiet the gnawings of conscience, so in Hindoostan the same class of individuals erect temples or construct tanks at the various holy places for the repose of their souls.

The number is very great of places thus consecrated by superstition. As sin, however, is regarded by the Hindoos as an impurity of the soul, nothing seems so admirably adapted for the removing of it as bathing in the sacred rivers, the principal of which are the Ganges, the Jumna, the Indus, the Cavery, and the Krishna. But as numerous individuals are prevented by distance and other causes from going to these rivers, the rivers, from regard to their piety, come to them. For many of those religious mendicants, armies of whom are perpetually traversing the country in all directions, recommend themselves to the charity of the devout by a present of a little water from the Ganges, or some other holy river, though perhaps it may, in fact, have been drawn from some neighbouring ditch. When this consecrated water is not, however, to be procured, the votary, while performing his purifying ablutions, directs his imagination to dip its wings in the Ganges, which, even by the rigid, is thought to do quite as well.

There are many lakes, springs, and pools of water which possess only a periodical privilege of washing away sin. The lake of Cumbhacum in Tanjore[24], for example, is endued with this spiritually cleansing

[24] Poshkur, in Marwar, according to Colonel Tod, is the most sacred lake in India. "It is placed in the centre of the valley, which here becomes wider, and affords abundant space for the numerous shrines and cenotaphs with which the hopes and fears

property only once in twelve years. Others, again, as the stream which descends from the mountain of Tirt'ha Malay, in the Carnatic, have the virtue every third year. The Brahmins, who are alone supposed to understand when the miraculous power has descended upon the element, despatch innumerable messengers into all parts of the country to announce the day for bathing in the sacred waters. Vast multitudes are immediately put in motion by the summons. So delightful is it to have a clear conscience! When the mighty host of pilgrims are all assembled upon the borders of the lake or stream, and have arranged themselves round the water, every heart beating with anxiety, and the deep hush of expectation every moment increasing, the spectacle which they present becomes eminently interesting. "They wait for the favourable hour and moment of the day, and on the instant of the astrologer's announcing it, all,—men, women, children,—plunge into the water at once, and with an uproar that is not to be imagined. In the midst of the confusion some are drowned, some suffocated, and still more meet with dislocated limbs. But the fate of those who lose their lives is rather envied than deplored. They are considered as martyrs of their zeal; and this happy death lets them pass immediately into the abode of bliss, without being obliged to undergo another life upon earth[25]."

of the virtuous and the wicked amongst the magnates of India have studded its margin. It is surrounded by sand-hills of considerable magnitude, excepting on the east, where a swamp extends to the very base of the mountains. The form of the lake may be called an irregular ellipse. Around its margin, except towards the marshy outlet, is a display of varied architecture. Every Hindoo family of rank has its niche here, for the purposes of devotional pursuits, when they could abstract themselves from mundane affairs." Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 773, 774.

[25] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 125.

But the most renowned places of pilgrimage in India, are Gaya, Benares, Prayâga, Jagannât'h, Râmêswara, Gangâ-Sâgara, Ayodhya, and Haridwârâ. Gaya[26], as we have already observed in the description of Hindoostan, is the modern capital of the Bahar district. The old town, in which the priests reside, is remarkable for its picturesque buildings and narrow streets, and being situated in the midst of rocks, near the parched sandy banks of the Phulgu, the air for the most part is intensely hot, and obscured in spring by perpetual clouds of dust. According to a Brahminical legend, this city acquired its sacred character from having been the scene of the victory of Vishnu over the Asura Gaya; the Buddhists, on the other hand, contend that it was the presence of their great prophet and legislator, whose birth-place or residence it was, which conferred its holy fragrance and mysterious virtue on the spot. But whatever was the original cause of its sanctity, no orthodox Hindoo now doubts of the efficacy of its atmosphere in removing sin. The number of pilgrims who annually resort thither, like Bunyan's hero, with the burden of their offences on their shoulders, and

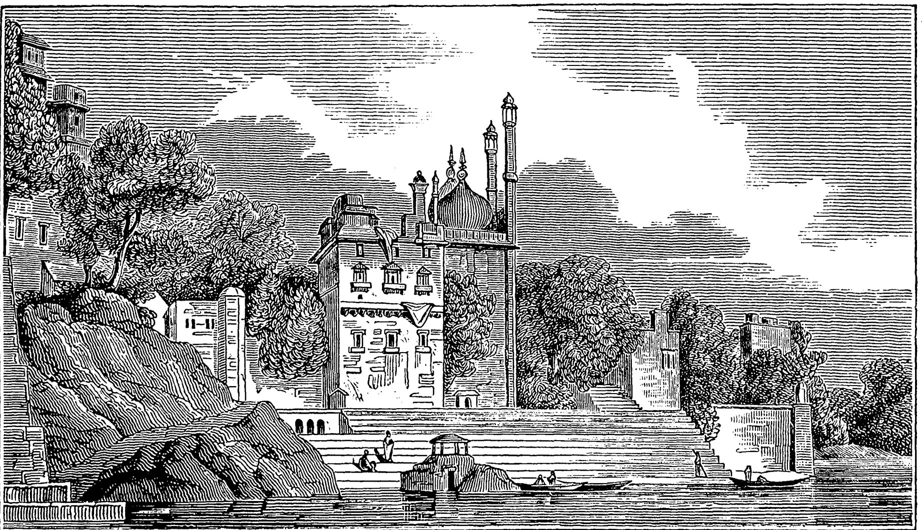
[26] "The Rana resolved to signalize his finale by a raid against the enemies of their faith, and to expel the barbarian from the holy land of Gaya. In ancient times this was by no means uncommon, and we have several instances in the annals of these states of princes resigning the purple, on the approach of old age, and by a life of austerity and devotion, pilgrimage and charity, seeking to make their peace with heaven for the sins inevitably committed by all who wield a sceptre. But when war was made against their religion by the Tatar proselytes to Islam, the Setlej and the Caggar were as the banks of the Jordan,—Gaya, their Jerusalem, their Holy Land;—and if there destiny filled his cup, the Hindoo chieftain was secure of beatitude, exempted from the troubles of second birth; and borne from the scene of probation in celestial cars by the *Apsaras,* was introduced at once into the realm of the sun." Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 276, 277.

depart in joy and gladness, lightened of their load, is prodigious, seldom falling short of one hundred thousand, and in years of peace amounting sometimes to double that number. Each of the devotees pays a duty to the British government, and the gross amount of the money thus collected in the year 1816 was about two hundred and thirty thousand rupees.

It was formerly the custom for the priests to keep the thumb of the votary tied, until his contribution was made proportionate to the demands of their avarice; but at present, under the English government, the offerings are all voluntary. Here, however, as elsewhere, the congregating together of a promiscuous rabble, with passions excited by novelty and exercise, the cupidity, the tyranny, the dissoluteness of the priests, are the fertile parents of numerous crimes[27].

Benares, the holiest of Hindoo cities, may be said to hold in India the station which Rome occupied, three centuries ago, in Christendom. In the estimation of the Brahmins it forms no part of the terrestrial globe, which rests on the thousand-headed serpent *Ananta*, or "Eternity;" whereas Benares is fixed on the point of Siva's trident. Hence, they say, no earthquakes are ever experienced there. From this city there is a "royal road" to heaven. The shortest residence within its holy precincts secures salvation. Even beef-eating Englishmen who repair thither to breathe their last may obtain "absorption into Brahm;" and it would appear, from the accounts of the Hindoos, that one of our superstitious countrymen, whose conscience, perhaps, had troubled his understanding, was fain to avail himself of the privilege which Siva has bestowed upon his favourite dwelling-place. However, to make

[27] Hamilton, Description of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 264—267. Ward, View of the History, Mythology, and Literature of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 346.



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City of Benares.

assurance doubly sure, he bequeathed to the Brahmins a sum of money for the construction of a temple after his death[28].

Among the objects which contribute to render Benares peculiarly holy is the celebrated Lingam, supposed to be a petrifaction of Siva himself! In honour of this mightiest of the deities the principal of the demigods have also set up an image of the Lingam in this city, which is now supposed to contain not less than one million images of this kind. Night and day therefore, as far as the influence of Hindooism extends, pilgrims with shaved heads and clothed in penitential garments, may be seen on the dusty roads, toiling on foot towards the Holy City[29].

Benares stands upon the northern bank of the Ganges, where the sinuosity of the sacred river forms a magnificent semicircle, of which its site occupies the external curve. The ground upon which it stands is considerably elevated, particularly towards the centre, from which point the rows of buildings descend in terraces, like the seats of an amphitheatre, to the water's edge. From the opposite shore, which is low and level, and projects itself inward between the horns of the half moon, the whole of this vast city, studded with innumerable pagan temples of remarkable beauty, and crowned by a lofty Mohammedan mosque, may be viewed at a single glance, rising, stair above stair, on the circular slope of the hill, or reflected with all its grandeur in the broad glassy surface of the Ganges. But, like Constantinople, and almost every other Oriental city, the interior of

[28] Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i. p. 307. Ward, who was, perhaps, Hamilton's authority, observes, after relating the anecdote,—"I suppress the name of my countryman from a sense of shame." Vol. iii. p. 347.

[29] If the pilgrim ride in a palanquin, or sail in a boat, he loses half the benefit of his pilgrimage. Ward, vol. iii. p. 345.

Benares falls very far short of what the picturesque beauty of its external appearance would seem to promise. The streets are crooked and dirty; and the houses, though in many cases six stories high, and built of stone, lose, by the narrowness of the streets, much of the effect which their bold irregular architecture is well calculated to produce.

"The number of temples," says Bishop Heber[30], "is very great, mostly small and stuck like shrines in the angles of the streets, and under the shadow of the lofty houses. Their forms, however, are not ungraceful, and there are many of them entirely covered over with beautiful and elaborate carvings, of flowers, animals, and palm branches, equalling in minuteness and richness the best specimens that I have seen of Gothic or Grecian architecture. The material of the building is a very good stone from Chunar, but the Hindoos here seem fond of painting them a deep red colour, and indeed of covering the more conspicuous parts of their houses with paintings in gaudy colours of flower-pots, men, women, bulls, elephants, gods and goddesses, in all their many-formed, many-headed, many-handed, and many-weaponed varieties. The sacred bulls devoted to Siva, of every age, tame and familiar as mastiffs, walk lazily up and down these narrow streets, or are seen lying across them, and hardly to be kicked up (any blows, indeed given them must be of the gentlest kind, or woe be to the profane wretch who braves the prejudices of this fanatic population), in order to make way for the Tonjon. Monkeys, sacred to Hanuman, the divine ape who conquered Ceylon for Râma, are in some parts of the town equally numerous, clinging to all the roofs and little projections of the temples, putting their impertinent heads and hands into every fruiterer's and confectioner's shop, and snatching the

[30] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. i. p 372, 373.

food from the children at their meals. Fakirs' houses, as they are called, occur at every turn, adorned with idols, and sending out an unceasing tinkling and strumming of vinas, biyals, and other discordant instruments; while religious mendicants of every Hindoo sect, offering every conceivable deformity, which chalk, cow-dung, disease, matted locks, distorted limbs, and disgusting and hideous attitudes of penance can show, literally line the principal streets on both sides."

Prayâga, or Allahabad, situated on the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges[31], is another celebrated place of pilgrimage. Hither numerous pious persons from all parts of Hindoostan journey to bathe in the sacred river, in whose waters many devotees seek a voluntary death. "He," says Ward, "who has visited Gaya, Benares, and Prayâga, flatters himself that he is possessed of extraordinary religious merits[32]." The pilgrim on his arrival first sits down on the edge of the river, where he causes his head and body to be shaved so that every hair may fall into the water, the Sacred Writings teaching that for every hair thus disposed of the penitent shall enjoy one million of years' residence in heaven. This ceremony being completed, he bathes, and either on that day or the following performs the obsequies of his deceased ancestors. The British government, careful to turn the superstition of the Hindoos to account, levies a tax of three rupees on each pilgrim[33]. Prayâga, notwithstanding its holiness, appears never to have been a great or magnificent city, and is now still more desolate and ruinous than Dacca. By the

31 The Saraswati also is here said to join the Ganges and the Jumna under ground. Hamilton, vol. i. p. 300.

32 View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 347.

33 Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i. p. 300.

natives it is sometimes in derision called *Fakir-abad*, or 'the City of Beggars[34].'"

Every person to whom India or its superstition has ever been an object of curiosity must be familiar with the name of Jagannât'h. The shrine of this idol stands on the coast of Orissa, amidst level burning sands; and to those who sail up or down the Bay of Bengal appears in the distance like a vast black obelisk. It is constructed of enormous blocks of granite, transported with incredible labour from the neighbouring mountains, and consists of a grotesque pyramidal structure, about three hundred and fifty feet in height, and a spacious area, enclosed by a lofty wall. Around the interior of this wall there runs a gallery, supported by a double range of pillars, and forming two hundred and seventy-six arcades. The four faces of the pyramid are covered with sculptured figures, and its apex is crowned with ornaments of gilt copper, which flash and glitter in the sun. The interior of this stupendous structure, from which the light of heaven would appear to be excluded, is lighted up by a hundred lamps which burn perpetually before the idol[35].

The image, which some writers have imagined to be of black stone, is of wood, and renewed every three years, when the original bones of Krishna are removed by a Brahmin from the belly of the old idol to that of the new one. The priest, during this awful operation, covers his eyes, lest the sight of such mysterious relics should consume him like light-

[34] Heber, Journal, &c. vol. i. p. 439.

[35] De Marlès, Histoire Générale de l'Inde, tom. i. p. 308—312. Anquetil Duperron says that the pagoda is several leagues distant from the sea; and that the city is surrounded by numerous pagodas with groves and gardens. Zend Avesta, Disc. Prélim. tom. i. p. 81, 82. See also Sonnerat, Voyage aux Indes, tom. i. p. 218.

ning. This salutary terror effectually represses in the minds of the worshippers all desire to see Krishna's bones[36]. Multitudes of dancing-girls, or sacred courtezans, have their dwellings in the precincts of this temple; and as idolatry is generally favourable to vice, so it more especially encourages it here, where the presiding demon is but the personification of murder and licentiousness.

But in describing this place it may, perhaps, be proper to borrow the language of an eye-witness. "We know that we are approaching Jagannât'h," says Dr. Buchanan, "(and yet we are more than fifty miles from it,) by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewed by the way. At this place we have been joined by several large bodies of pilgrims, perhaps two thousand in number, who have come from various parts of northern India. Some of them, with whom I have conversed, say that they have been two months on their march, travelling slowly in the hottest season of the year, with their wives and children. Some old persons are among them who wish to die at Jagannât'h. Num-

[36] One instance, however, is recorded of a devotee who indulged this fatal curiosity. "The Rajah of Burdwan, Kirti Chandra, expended, it is said, twelve lacs of rupees in a journey to Jagannât'h, and in bribing the Brahmins to permit him to see these bones. For the sight of the bones he paid two lacs of rupees; but he died in six months afterwards *for his temerity*." Ward, vol. iii. p. 349, *note*. Anquetil Duperron tells a story of a Dutchman, who, upon being admitted into the temple, and seeing the sparkling eyes of Jagannât'h, of which the one was of carbuncle, the other of ruby, grew enamoured of the latter, and had the ingenuity to obtain possession of the object of his affection, apparently without meeting with the fate of the Rajah of Burdwan. Zend Avesta, Disc. Prélim. tom. i. p. 82. The practice of inserting eyes of precious stones in the statues of the gods prevailed among the Greeks. Even in Phidias's Minerva, the eyes were of brilliant gems. See Plato, in the Greater Hippias.

bers of pilgrims die on the road; and their bodies generally remain unburied. On a plain by the river, near the pilgrim's caravansera, at this place, there are more than a hundred skulls. The dogs, jackalls, and vultures, seem to live here on human prey[37]."

The amazed traveller proceeded, with an imagination already sickened by the scene he had beheld, but anticipating spectacles still more strange. Arrived within sight of the temple, he observes:—"Many thousands of pilgrims have accompanied us for some days past. They cover the road before and behind, as far as the eye can reach. At nine o'clock this morning, the temple of Jagannât'h appeared in view at a great distance. When the multitude first saw it, they gave a shout and fell to the ground and worshipped. I have heard nothing to-day but shouts and acclamations, by the successive bodies of pilgrims. From the place where I now stand I have a view of a host of people like an army, encamped at the outer gate of the town of Jagannât'h; where a guard of soldiers is posted to prevent their entering the town, until they have paid the pilgrim's tax. I passed a devotee to-day, who laid himself down at every step, measuring the road to Jagannât'h by the length of his body, as a penance of merit to please the god[38]."

[37] Buchanan, Christian Researches, p. 19.

[38] Buchanan, Christ. Researches, p. 20. On the subject of the Pilgrim's tax, mentioned by Dr. Buchanan, a certain degree of misunderstanding appears to exist. The East India Company has been supposed to encourage idolatry for the purpose of participating in its unhallowed gains. But this charge appears to be unjust. Its object, in levying the tax, which amounts in some cases to one, in others to six rupees, seems rather to have been to repress and mitigate the madness of idolatry, by rendering it expensive and difficult. And the result justifies this interpretation of their conduct. For, during several years after the conquest of Cuttak by the English, the tax was not levied; in consequence of which prodigious multitudes of pilgrims thronged to the temple, of whom many

As he drew near the gate, the prodigious multitude of pilgrims, meeting in the great road leading to the city, like the confluence of a thousand streams, presented the appearance of a living torrent, rolling onward with an irresistible impulse. Some secret design seemed to occupy the minds of all. On perceiving an European in the midst of them, they raised a tremendous shout, but it was not a shout of menacing or disapprobation. All castes and tribes of men may mingle together, and eat from the same table, in the presence of Jagannât'h, who knows no distinction of rank or sect. The sight of their fellow-traveller inspired these wretched devotees with the determination to force their way into the city in his train, without paying the pilgrim's tax, for they had travelled far, with indigence and misery for their companions. The traveller was apprised of his danger by an old sannyasi, but it was too late; the mob was now in motion, and with a tumultuous shout pressed violently towards the gate. The guard within, perceiving his danger, opened it, and the multitude, rushing through, bore him forward in the torrent into Jagannât'h. The struggle to enter now became terrific. The way was narrow and choked up by the crowd, and as, in a rabble so agitated and fanatical, neither the weakness of sex nor the infirmity of old age was regarded, thousands appeared

thousands perished on the road through fatigue, disease, or want. Anquetil Duperron remarks that he encountered on the way to Jagannât'h an army of six thousand sannyasis, armed with sabres, bows, matchlocks, &c., all exhibiting manifestations of insolent ferocity. These fanatical ruffians no doubt subsisted during their journey on rapine and plunder; and when this resource failed them, and charity was not equal to supply its place, starvation and death was their inevitable fate. In spite of the tax vast numbers still perish; sometimes, perhaps, not more than two hundred in the year, but on other occasions the number may exceed two thousand. Ward, vol. iii. p. 349, 350.

about to be suffocated or trampled to death, when suddenly one of the side-posts of the gate, which was of wood, gave way, and fell to the ground. This circumstance alone appears to have prevented the loss of lives.

Being now within the city Dr. Buchanan hastened to witness the dismal fane, and the worship there offered up to the idol. "Buddruck," says he, "is but the vestibule of Jagannât'h. No record of ancient or modern history can give, I think, an adequate idea of this valley of death. It may be truly compared with the valley of Hinnom." "This morning I viewed the temple; a stupendous fabric, and truly commensurate with the extensive sway of the 'horrid king.' As other temples are usually adorned with figures emblematical of their religion, so Jagannât'h has representations (numerous and varied) of that vice which constitutes the essence of his worship. The walls and gates are covered with indecent emblems in massive and durable sculpture ..... I have also visited the sand plains by the sea, in some places whitened by the bones of the pilgrims, and another place a little way out of the town, called by the English the Golgotha, where the dead bodies are usually cast forth, and where dogs and vultures are ever seen." "There is scarcely any verdure to refresh the sight near Jagannât'h; the temple and town being nearly encompassed by hills of sand which has been cast up in the lapse of ages by the surge of the ocean. All is barren and desolate to the eye, and in the ear there is the never intermitting sound of the roaring sea."

No writer, either ancient or modern, has given a more appalling picture of superstition than is presented us by Dr. Buchanan in his account of Jagannât'h. Over a part of this picture, however, he was compelled to let fall a curtain. This curtain decency forbids us to remove. It conceals abominations, if

possible, still more horrible than those which the early fathers[39] of the Christian church objected to the pagans of the west, in the existence of which we should hesitate to believe, did we not find them still subsisting in a province of our own empire. "I have returned home," continues the traveller, "from witnessing a scene which I shall never forget. At twelve o'clock of this day, being the great day of the feast, the Moloch of Hindoostan was brought out of his temple amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. When the idol was placed on his throne, a shout was raised by the multitude, such as I had never heard before. It continued equable for a few minutes, and then gradually died away. After a short interval of silence, a murmur was heard at a distance; all eyes were turned towards the place, and behold a *grove* advancing. A body of men, having green branches or palms in their hands, approached with great celerity. The people opened a way for them; and when they had come up to the throne, they fell down before him that sat thereon, and worshipped. And the multitude again sent forth a voice, 'like the sound of a great thunder.' But the voices I now heard were not those of melody or of joyful acclamation, for there is no harmony in the praise of Moloch's worshippers. Their number indeed brought to my mind the countless multitude of the Revelations; but their voices gave no tuneful hosanna or hallelujah, but rather a yell of approbation united with a kind of hissing applause. I was at a loss how to account for this latter noise, until I was directed to notice the women, who emitted a sound like that of whistling, with the lips

[39] Clemens Alexandrinus, Admon. ad Gentes, p. 25, where he speaks of certain indecent appellations of Bacchus. See Menage 'Origini della Lingua Italiana;' and Vossius in Pomp. Melam. lib. ii. cap. 2, p. 133.

circular and the tongue vibrating; as if a serpent would speak by their organs, uttering human sounds.

"The throne of the idol was placed on a stupendous car or tower, about sixty feet in height, resting on wheels which indented the ground deeply as they turned slowly under the ponderous machine. Attached to it were six cables, of the size and length of a ship's cable, by which the people drew it along. Thousands of men, women, and children pulled by each cable, crowding so closely that some could only use one hand. Infants are made to exert their strength in this office, for it is accounted a merit of righteousness to move the god. Upon the tower were the priests and satellites of the idol surrounding his throne. I was told that there were about a hundred and twenty persons upon the car altogether. The idol is a block of wood having a frightful visage painted black, with a distended mouth of a bloody colour. His arms are of gold, and he is dressed in gorgeous apparel. The other two idols are of a white and yellow colour. Five elephants preceded the three towers, bearing towering flags; dressed in crimson caparisons, and having bells hanging to their caparisons, which sounded musically as they moved. I went on in the procession, close by the tower of Moloch; which, as it was drawn with difficulty, 'grated on its many wheels harsh thunder.' After a few minutes it stopped; and now the worship of the god began. A high-priest mounted the car in front of the idol, and pronounced his obscene stanzas in the ears of the people, who responded at intervals in the same strain. 'These songs,' said he, 'are the delight of the god. His car can only move when he is pleased with the song.' The car moved on a little way, and then stopped. A boy of about twelve years old was then brought forth to attempt something yet more lascivious, if peradventure the

god would move. The 'child perfected the praise' of his idol with such ardent expressions and gesture, that the god was pleased, and the multitude emitting a sensual yell of delight, urged the car along; after a few minutes it stopped again. An aged minister of the idol then stood up, and with a long rod in his hand, which he moved with indecent action, completed the variety of this disgusting exhibition. I felt a consciousness of doing wrong in witnessing it. I was also somewhat appalled at the magnitude and horror of the spectacle; I felt like a guilty person on whom all eyes were fixed, and I was about to withdraw. But a scene of a different kind was now to be presented. The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood. We have seen the former. Now comes the blood:—

"After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower, as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forwards. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to *smile* when the libation of blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small money, on the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried to the Golgotha, where I have just been viewing his remains[40]."

The other places of pilgrimage, as Râmêswara[41],

[40] Buchanan, Christian Researches, p. 22—28. See also the account of the temple of Jagannât'ha given by Mansbach, in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 253—260.

[41] Râmêswara, near Cape Comorin, received its name and sanctity from the seventh incarnation of Vishnu in the form of Râma. Asiat. Res. iii. 564.

Gangâ-Sâgara, Ayodhya, &c., appear to possess inferior attractions, as they are resorted to by much fewer pilgrims. But at Hurdwar, or Hari-dwârâ, (i. e. " the gate of Hari, or Vishnu,") a city erected near the pass through which the Ganges bursts from the mountains, two millions and a half of devotees have been known to be collected together during the festival. The object of the pilgrims in repairing thither is to bathe, for a certain number of days, in the waters of the sacred river, at this consecrated spot. In addition to religious motives, however, the pilgrims are likewise actuated by the desire of gain; for, as among the Mohammedans at Mecca, the festival is converted into a fair, where a very extensive annual commerce is transacted. The motley multitude is composed of natives of Caubul, Cashmere, Lahore, Serinagur, Bhutan, Kumaoon, and the plains of Hindoostan, whose dress, features, and manners afford the most striking contrasts. From some of the very distant countries above mentioned, whole families, men, women, and children, undertake the journey, some travelling on foot, some on horseback, and many, particularly women and children, in long heavy carts, railed, and covered with sloping matted roofs, to defend them against the sun and wet weather; and during the continuance of the fair those serve also as habitations[42].

In describing the principal festivals of the Hindoos, among whom,—to generalize the adage applied in Rajast'han to the court of Mewar,—there are " *nine* holidays out of *seven* days," I shall commence with those of the Rajpoot states. The first festival of the year is that of *Vasanti*, the lovely goddess of the spring. It commences on the fifth of the month of

[42] Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 311—313.

Magha, which, in 1819, corresponded with the 30th of January, and continues for forty days. During this period the utmost licence prevails; the lower classes indulge in intoxication; and even "the most respectable individuals, who would at other times be shocked to utter an indelicate allusion, roam about with the groups of bacchanals, reciting stanzas of the warmest description in praise of the powers of nature, as did the conscript fathers of Rome during the Saturnalia. In this season, when the barriers of rank are thrown down, and the spirit of democracy is let loose, though never abused, even the wild Bhil, or savage Mêr, will leave his forest or mountain shade to mingle in the revelries of the capital, and decorating his ebon hair or tattered turban with a garland of jessamine, will join the clamorous parties that perambulate the streets[43]."

During this festival they celebrate the *Ahairea*, or "Spring Hunt," which ushers in the merry month of Phâlguna. The dresses worn on this occasion are wholly or partly green, and are distributed by the prince among his chiefs and followers. The hour for sallying forth to slay the wild boar in honour of Gauri, the Indian Ceres, is carefully fixed by the royal astrologer; and as success in this sacred hunt is supposed to be ominous of future good, no means are neglected to secure it, either by scouts previously discovering the lair, or the desperate efforts of the hunters to slay the animal when roused. When the boar is discovered, the spot is immediately surrounded by the hunters, who endeavour by loud shouts and vociferations to start the game. Frequently a whole drove breaks at once from the thicket. Then every horseman at once impels his steed, and with lance or sword, regardless of rock, ravine, or tree, presses on the foe, whose knowledge

[43] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 563.

of the country is of no avail when thus circumvented, and the ground soon reeks with gore, with which that of the horse or his rider is not unfrequently mingled. It would, says Colonel Tod, appal even an English fox-hunter to see the Rajpoots driving their steeds at full speed, bounding like the antelope over every barrier,—the thick jungle covert, or rocky steep, bare of soil or vegetation,—with their lances balanced in the air, or leaning on the saddle-bow slashing at the boar. On these hunting expeditions the royal kitchen takes the field with the sportsmen, and when the repast, of which all partake, has been prepared in some rural spot, they renew their toils, or return, if the hunt be over, in triumph to the capital[44].

" As Phâlguna advances, the bacchanalian mirth increases ; groups are continually patrolling the streets, throwing a crimson powder at each other, or ejecting a solution of it from syringes, so that the garments and visages of all are one mass of crimson. On the eighth, emphatically called the *Phâg*, the Rana joins the queens and their attendants in the palace, when all restraint is removed, and mirth is unlimited. But the most brilliant sight is the playing of the *hôlî* on horseback, on the terrace in front of the palace. Each chief who chooses to join has a plentiful supply of missiles, formed of thin plates of mica or talc enclosing this crimson powder, called *abîra*, which, with the most graceful and dexterous horsemanship, they dart at each other, pursuing, caprioling, and jesting. This part of it much resembles the Saturnalia of Rome of this day, when similar missiles are scattered at the carnival. The last day, or *Poonum*, ends the *hôlî*, when the nakaras from the Tripolia summon all the chiefs with their retinues to attend their prince, and accompany

[44] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 565, 566.

him in procession to the *chougan*, their Champ de Mars. In the centre of this is a long sala or hall, the ascent to which is by a flight of steps; the roof is supported by square columns, without any walls, so that the court is entirely open. Here, surrounded by his chiefs, the Rana passes an hour, listening to the songs in praise of *Holica*, while a scurrilous couplet from some wag in the crowds reminds him that exalted rank is no protection against the licence of the spring Saturnalia. . . . While the Rana and his chiefs are thus amused above, the buffoons and itinerant groups mix with the cavalcade, throw powder in their eyes, or deluge their garments with the crimson solution. To resent it would only expose the sensitive party to be laughed at, and draw upon him a host of those bacchanals; so that no alternative exists, between keeping entirely aloof or mixing in the fray. On the last day the Rana feasts his chiefs, and the camp breaks up with the distribution of *khanda narsal*, or swords and cocoa-nuts, to the chiefs, and all whom the king delighteth to honour. These khandas are but 'of lath,' in shape like the Andrea Ferara, or long cut-and-thrust, the favourite weapon of the Rajpoot. They are painted in various ways, like harlequin's sword, and meant as a burlesque, in unison with the character of the day, when war is banished, and the multiplication, not the destruction of man is the behest of the goddess who rules the spring. At night-fall the forty days conclude with the burning of the *hôlî*, when they light large fires, into which various substances, as well as the crimson *abîra*, are thrown, and around which groups of children are dancing and screaming in the streets like so many infernals. Until three hours after sunrise of the new month of Cheyt these orgies are continued with increased vigour, when the natives bathe, change their garments, worship, and return

to the rank of sober citizens; and princes and chiefs receive gifts from their domestics[45]."

On the seventh of the Hindoo month of Cheyt (or Chaitra) the Rajpoot matrons celebrate the festival of *Sitla* (or *Sîtalâ*), the goddess of children. Her shrine in Mewar is situated upon the top of an isolated hill, in the valley of Oodipoor, whither all the married ladies of the capital proceed with their offerings. The worship of the Goddess of Spring still continues. The ladies of Oodipoor, accompanied by their lords, repair on the fifteenth of this month to the groves and gardens, where parties, crowned with chaplets of roses, jessamine, or oleander, assemble for the purpose of feasting and mirth.

But the most classical of Hindoo festivals is that which the Rajpoots celebrate during nine days (the number sacred to the Creative Power), in honour of the beneficent Gauri, and denominated the "Festival of Flowers." *Gauri*, it should be observed, is another name for Bhavani, the wife of Siva, a divinity who bears, under many of her aspects, a stronger analogy with Venus than with Ceres. This festival takes place at the vernal equinox, when nature, in these almost tropical regions, "is in the full expanse of her charms, and the matronly Gauri casts her golden mantle over the beauties of the verdant Vasanti. Then the fruits exhibit their promise to the eye; the air is impregnated with aroma, and the crimson poppy contrasts with the spikes of golden grain, to form a wreath for the beneficent Gauri[46]."

[45] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 567, 568.

[46] "*Gauri* is one of the names of *Isa*, or *Parvati*, wife of the greatest of the gods, Mahâdêva, or Iswara, who is joined with her in these rites, which almost exclusively appertain to the women. The meaning of Gauri is 'yellow,' emblematic of the ripened harvest, and the votaries of the goddess adore her effigies, which are those of a matron painted the colour of ripe

The ceremonies commence on the entrance of the sun into Aries (the opening of the Hindoo year), with the formation of earthern images of Bhavani and Siva, which are immediately placed together. A small trench is then opened in the earth, in which barley is sown. The ground is irrigated, and artificial heat supplied, until the grain begins to germinate, when the ladies join hands, and dance round the trench, invoking the blessing of Bhavani on their husbands. After this the young corn is taken up, and presented by the ladies to their husbands, who wear it in their turbans. Other rites, known only to the initiated, having been performed during several days within the houses and palaces, the images are adorned, and prepared to be carried in procession to the lake.

"At length the hour arrives, the martial nakaras give the signal 'to the cannonier without,' and speculation is at rest when the guns on the summit of the castle of Ekling-ghur announce that Gauri has commenced her excursion. The cavalcade assembles on the magnificent terrace, and the Rana surrounded by his nobles leads the way to the boats, of a form as primitive as that which conveyed the Argonauts to Colchis. The scenery is admirably adapted for these fêtes, the ascent being gradual from the margin of the lake, which here forms a fine bay, and gently rising to the crest of the ridge on which the palace and dwellings of the chiefs are built. Every turret and balcony is crowded with spectators, from

corn; and though her image is represented with only two hands, in one of which she holds the lotus, which the Egyptians regarded as emblematic of reproduction, yet not unfrequently they equip her with the warlike couch, the discus, and the club, to denote that the goddess, whose gifts sustain life, is likewise accessory to the loss of it, uniting, as Gauri and Kali, the characters of life and death, like the Isis and Cybele of the Egyptians." Colonel Tod, i. 570.

the palace to the water's edge; and the ample flight of marble steps which intervene from the Tripolia, or triple portal, to the boats, is a dense mass of females in variegated robes, whose scarfs but half conceal their ebon tresses adorned with the rose and the jessamine. A more imposing or more exhilarating sight cannot be imagined than the entire population of a city thus assembled for the purpose of rejoicing, the countenance of every individual, from the prince to the peasant, dressed in smiles. Carry the eye to heaven, and it rests on 'a sky without a cloud;' below is the magnificent lake, the even surface of the deep blue waters broken only by palaces of marble, whose arched piazzas are seen through the foliage of orange groves, plantain, and tamarind; while the vision is bounded by noble mountains, their peaks towering over each other, and composing an immense amphitheatre. Here the deformity of vice intrudes not; no object is degraded by inebriation; no tumultuous disorder or deafening clamour, but all wait patiently, with eyes directed to the Tripolia, the appearance of Gauri. At length the procession is seen winding down the steep, and in the midst, borne on a throne gorgeously arrayed in yellow robes, and blazing with 'barbaric pearl and gold,' the goddess appears: on either side the two beauties wave the silver *châmara* [47] over her head, while the more favoured damsels act as harbingers, preceding her with wands of silver: the whole chaunting hymns. On her approach, the Rana, his chiefs and ministers, arise, and remain standing until the goddess is seated on her throne, close to the water's edge, when all bow, and the prince and his court take their seat in the boats. The females then form a circle round the goddess, unite hands, and with a measured step,

[47] The *châmara* is a fan or fly-brush, usually made of the tail of the *yak* or cow of Tartary (Bos grunniens).

and various graceful inclinations of the body, keeping time by beating the palms at particular cadences, move round the image singing hymns, some in honour of the goddess of abundance, others on love and chivalry, and embodying little episodes of national achievements, occasionally sprinkled with *double entendres*, which excite a smile and significant nod from the chiefs, and an inclination of the head of the fair choristers. The festival being entirely female, not a single male mixed in the immense groups, and even Iswara himself, the husband of Gauri, attracts no attention, as appears from his ascetic or mendicant form begging his dole from the bounteous and universal mother. It is taken for granted that the goddess is occupied in bathing all the time she remains, and ancient tradition says death was the penalty of any male intruding on these solemnities. At length, the ablutions over, the goddess is taken up and conveyed to the palace with the same forms and state. The Rana and his chiefs then unmoor their boats, and are rowed round the margin of the lake, to visit in succession the other images of the goddess, around which female groups are chaunting and worshipping, as already described; with which ceremonies the evening closes, when the whole terminates with a grand display of fireworks, the *finale* of each of the three days dedicated to Gauri[48]."

"The festival of *Kâmadeva*, the God of Love, is celebrated during the last days of spring. Although the hot winds have already begun to blow, causing the flowers to droop, and depriving the verdure of its freshness, the rose still continues to bloom, even amidst all the heats of summer, affording the beautiful Rajpoot girls the most fragrant chaplets to adorn their hair. They likewise during this festival adorn their tresses, 'long and black as a tempestuous

48 Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 571, 572.

winter night,' with garlands of jasmin, white and yellow, and of the *magra* and *champaca*, which delight in extreme heat. Of the same flowers they weave bracelets for their arms, or variegated wreaths, which they wear as pendant collars. The ladies of Rajpootana exhibit, in their devotion to the God of Love, the same fervour of enthusiasm as is shown by their husbands, the bravest of the brave, in the worship of the Indian Mars. But no where, even in this land of violent passions, is the adoration of Kâmadeva more ardent than among the ladies of Oodipoor, 'the City of the Rising Sun,' who, during the continuance of his festival, invoke the power of this 'God of Gods' in songs and hymns composed by the sacred bards of antiquity[49].

"The *Norâtri*, or 'Nine Days' Festival,' celebrated by the Rajpoot in honour of the 'God of War,' commences on the first day of the Indian month Asoj. During this festival, which is peculiar to the martial tribes, the Worship of the Sword, that 'imposing rite,' as Colonel Tod justly terms it, which appears to have descended to them from their Scythian ancestors, takes place with great pomp and ceremony. The prince, after fasting, ablution, and prayer, orders the great double-edged scimitar, the emblem of Mars, to be brought forth from the hall of arms to receive the homage of the court. It is then carried in procession to the Gate of Krishna, where it is delivered to the *Raj-Yogi*, or chief of the monastic warriors of Mewar, by whom it is placed on the altar of Heri, the God of Battle. Early in the afternoon the chiefs and their retainers are assembled by the sound of the nakaras, and proceed in the train of the Rana to the royal stables, where a buffalo is sacrificed in honour of the war-horse. The cavalcade then

[49] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 577.

repairs to the temple of Devi. The Rana, seating himself beside the Raj-Yogi, presents the old warrior with two pieces of silver and a cocoa-nut, and, having performed homage to the sword, returns in procession to the palace. On the following day several victims are sacrificed, some on the Field of Mars, others in the temple of *Amba Mata*, the Universal Mother. The ceremonies are continued for nine days, during which, among other rites, the steeds and elephants, caparisoned, after bathing in the sacred lake, in costly magnificent housings, receive the homage of their riders. On the ninth day the great scimitar is brought back in state to the palace by the chief of the monastic warriors, who is presented with a dress of honour; while the second in command, who has performed various austerities during the nine days, has his patera, or hollow gourd, filled with gold and silver coin. The whole body of Yogis are then invited to a feast, presents are made to the chiefs, and the festival concludes with the worship of the sword, the shield, and the spear, which takes place within the palace. At three o'clock in the morning the prince retires to rest, and the Norâtri is at an end[50]."

"The 'Festival of Lamps,' celebrated on the *ides* of Kartic, in honour of Lakshmi, the 'Goddess of Wealth,' is one of the most brilliant fêtes of Rajast'han, called the Dewali, when every city, village, and encampment exhibits a blaze of splendour. The potters' wheels revolve, for weeks before, solely in the manufacture of lamps, and from the palace to

[50] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 584—586. The Rajpoot princes, partial to holidays, cavalcades, processions, and every thing which induces an exhibition of martial pomp, continue the ceremonies even to the eleventh day, but the Norâtri properly terminates with the ninth.

the peasant's hut, every one supplies himself with them, in proportion to his means, and arranges them according to his fancy. Stuffs, pieces of gold, and sweetmeats are carried in trays, and consecrated at the temple of Lakshmi, to whom the day is consecrated. The Rana on this occasion honours his prime minister with his presence at dinner, and this chief officer of state, who is always of the mercantile caste, pours oil into a *terra cotta* lamp, which his sovereign holds; the same libation of oil is permitted by each of the near relations of the minister. On this day it is incumbent upon every votary of Lakhsmi to try the chance of the dice, and from their success in the dewali, the prince, the chief, the merchant, and the artisan foretel the state of their coffers for the ensuing year[51]."

On the ninth and tenth of April, the famous *Dhôl-jûtra* or Swinging Festival is celebrated, in honour of Kali. The crowd assembled on this occasion at Calcutta is generally immense. Musical instruments rouse the worshippers early in the morning, and the multitude, many of whom bear torches, hasten to the scene of action from every street and lane of the city, accompanied by numerous fanatical devotees, who walk or dance along, torturing themselves fearfully as they proceed. Doubtless the devotion of these men is sincere. They hope, by thus anticipating the judgment of heaven, to avert the chastisement which their crimes, perhaps, merit but too well. The exhibition, however, of their penance is highly revolting. They thrust spears through their tongues, fling themselves from elevated scaffolds upon beds of sharp pikes, insert iron hooks through the muscles of their sides, by which they are lifted up, suspended to the end of a pendulous beam, and whirled round as a penance of merit to appease the goddess.

[51] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 597.

Independently of these fanatics, however, the scene is eminently animated and picturesque. "The music," says Bishop Heber, who was present at the festival of 1825, "consisted chiefly of large double drums, ornamented with plumes of black feathers, like those of a hearse, which rose considerably higher than the heads of the persons who played on them; large crooked trumpets, like the *litui* of the ancients, and small gongs suspended from a bamboo, which rested on the shoulders of two men, the last of whom played upon it with a large thick heavy drumstick, or cudgel. All the persons who walked in the procession, and a large majority of the spectators, had their faces, bodies, and white cotton clothes daubed all over with vermilion, the latter to a degree which gave them the appearance of being actually dyed rose colour. They were also crowned with splendid garlands of flowers, with girdles and baldrics of the same. Many trophies and pageants of different kinds were paraded up and down on stages drawn by horses or bullocks. Some were mythological, others were imitations of different European figures, soldiers, ships, &c., and, in particular, there was one very large model of a steam-boat. The devotees went about with small spears thrust through their tongues and arms, and still more with hot irons pressed close against their sides. All were naked to the waist, covered with flowers, and plentifully raddled with vermilion, while their long black wet hair hung down their backs almost to their loins. From time to time, as they passed us, they laboured to seem to dance, but in general their step was slow, their countenances expressive of resigned and patient suffering, and there was no appearance that I saw of any thing like frenzy or intoxication[52]."

[52] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 100, 101.

At Allahabad the same traveller beheld, in the month of September, the Festival of Râma and Sita, which he describes in his usual lively amusing manner. It is now considered merely as a show, and consists in a dramatic representation, which lasts during several days, of Râma's history and adventures. As no religious import is attached to the various ceremonies that take place, it is attended without scruple even by Musulmans. "I found Râma, his brother Lakshmana, and his betrothed wife Sita," says the Bishop, "represented by three children of about twelve years old, seated in Durbar, under an awning in the principal street of the Sepoy lines, with a great crowd round them, some fanning them, of which, poor things, they had great need, some blowing horns and beating gongs and drums, and the rest shouting till the air rang again. The two heroes were very fine boys and acted their parts admirably. Each had a gilt bow in his left hand, and a sabre in his right, their naked bodies were almost covered with gilt ornaments and tinsel, they had high tinsel crowns on their heads, their foreheads and bodies spotted with charcoal, chalk, and vermilion, and altogether perfectly resembled the statues of Hindoo deities,

'Except that of their eyes alone
The twinkle show'd they were not stone.'

Poor little Sita, wrapt up in a gorgeous veil of flimsy finery, and tired to death, had dropped her head on her breast, and seemed happily insensible to all which was going on. The Brahmin sepoys, who bore the principal part in the play, made room, with great solicitude, for us to see. I asked a good many questions, and obtained very ready answers in much the same way, and with no more appearance of reverence and devotion than one should receive from an English mob at a puppet-show. 'I see Râma, Sita,

Lakshmana, but where is Hanuman?' (the famous monkey general). 'Hanuman,' was the answer, 'is not yet come; but that man,' pointing to a stout soldier of singularly formidable exterior, 'is Hanuman, and he will soon arrive.' The man began laughing as if half ashamed of his destination, but now took up the conversation, telling me that next day was to be a far prettier play than I now saw, for Sita was to be stolen away by Râvana and his attendant evil spirits; Râma and Lakshmana were to go to the jungle in great sorrow to seek for her,

'Râma, your Râma to green wood must hie!'

'but then (laughing again) I and my army shall come, and we shall fight bravely, bravely, bravely.' The evening following I was engaged, but the next day I repeated my visit; I was then too late for the best part of the show, which had consisted of a first and unsuccessful attack by Râma and his army on the fortress of the gigantic ravisher. That fortress however I saw, an enclosure of bamboos covered with paper and painted with doors and windows, within which was a frightful paper giant, fifteen feet high, with ten or twelve arms, each grasping either a sword, an arrow, a bow, a battle-axe, or a spear. At his feet sate poor little Sita as motionless as before, guarded by two figures to represent demons. The brothers, in a splendid palkee, were conducting the retreat of their army; the divine Hanuman, as naked and almost as hairy as the animal whom he represented, was gambolling before them with a long tail tied round his waist, a mask to represent the head of a baboon, and two great painted clubs in his hands. His army followed, a number of men with similar tails and masks, their bodies dyed with indigo, and also armed with clubs. . . . There yet remained two or three days of pageant before Sita's

release, purification, and re-marriage to her hero lover; but for this conclusion I did not remain in Allahabad. At Benares, I am told, the show is on such occasions really splendid. The Raja attends in state with all the principal inhabitants of the place, he lends his finest elephants and jewels to the performers, who are children of the most eminent families, and trained up by long previous education. I saw enough however at Allahabad to satisfy my curiosity. The show is now a very innocent one, but there was a hideous and accursed practice in ‘the good old times,’ before the British police was established, at least if all which the Musulmans and English say is to be believed, which shows the Hindoo superstition in all its horrors. The poor children, who had been thus feasted, honoured, and made to contribute to the popular amusement, were, it is asserted, always poisoned in the sweetmeats given them in the last day of the show, that it might be said their spirits were absorbed into the deities whom they had represented. Nothing of the sort can now be done. The children, instead of being brought for the purpose, from a distance by the priests, are the children of neighbours whose prior and subsequent history is known, and Râma and Sita now grow old like other boys and girls[53].”

The last, and in the greater part of India, the most famous of all the Hindoo festivals, is that called *Pongol*, celebrated on the last three days of the year. On this occasion the Hindoos devote the whole day to mutual visits and compliments, as Europeans do the first day of the year. The cause of their rejoicing is two-fold: first, that the month of December, every day of which is unlucky, is about to expire; second, that it is to be succeeded by a month of which every day is fortunate. To avert the baleful

[53] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 446—450.

effects of the expiring month, a number of Sannyasis proceed, about four o'clock in the morning, from door to door, beating on a metallic plate which produces a piercing sound. The people, being thus roused from sleep, are counselled to take wise precautions, and to guard against the evil presages of the month, by expiatory offerings, and sacrifices to Siva, who presides over it. With this view, every morning, the women scour a space of about two feet square before the door of the house, upon which they draw several white lines with flowers. Upon these they place several little balls of cow-dung, sticking in each a citron blossom. These balls with their flowers are collected every day, and preserved until the conclusion of the festival, when the women, who are here the sole actors, place them in a basket, and, preceded by musical instruments, march in procession, with great rejoicing and clapping of hands, to the public tank or some desert place where they cast away the relics. The first day is passed in feasting. On the second, which is sacred to the sun, married women purify themselves by bathing with all their garments on. Rising dripping out of the stream they in that condition dress rice and milk in the open air, in honour of the God of Obstacles. The third day, when the men alone perform, is devoted to the worship of the cow, the emblem of Bhavani. They are first sprinkled with holy water, like the horses in the Circensian games; the devotees next make four prostrations before them; their horns are then painted with various colours; garlands of flowers, and strings of cocoa-nuts and other fruit are put round their necks, which, being shaken off as they walk or run about, are picked up by the devout, who preserve them as so many sacred relics. The consecrated animals are then driven in a body through the villages, accompanied and followed by crowds of

people, who make a discordant noise upon various musical instruments. During the remainder of the day the cows are permitted to stray whithersoever they please, and feed in every field without restraint. The festival concludes by taking the images of the gods from the temples, and carrying them in procession, with great pomp, to the spot where the cattle have been collected. A number of dancing-girls move in front of the crowd, in honour of the idols, and pause from time to time, "to exhibit their wanton movements, and charm the audience with their lascivious songs[54]."

[54] Dubois, Description of the Character, Manners and Customs of the People of India, p. 386—389. We have in the preceding pages confined ourselves to an enumeration of only a few of the principal festivals of the Hindoos. Those who wish to obtain further information on the subject we must refer to Ward's View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. ii. p. 22, &c. (third edition); and to Sir William Jones's dissertation on the lunar year of the Hindoos, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 257—293, where a very complete list of all the Hindoo festivals, arranged according to the months in which they occur, is given.

Chapter VII.

CHARACTER—MANNERS—AND CUSTOMS.

The manners of a people are merely the modes in which their national character developes itself in the ordinary business of life. Justly to appreciate the manners of a foreign nation is a task of extreme difficulty, not only to the historian who, for the most part, can only view them as they are reflected in the descriptions of others; but also for the traveller who is supposed to contemplate them as they are in themselves. For it often happens that travellers see rather with the eyes of their predecessors than with their own, and only make their experience an excuse for continuing to be enslaved by their old prejudices. Besides, in the case of the Hindoos, no traveller can speak, from personal experience, upon the general topic, the field of observation being much too large to be thoroughly investigated during the greatest extent of life indulged to man. Happily, however, a division of labour has taken place. Numerous individuals, scattered by choice or chance over the vast scene of Hindoostan, following each the bent of his own inclinations, have described with more or less of judgment and accuracy separate portions of the great whole. We thus inherit, as it were, the rich harvest sown by their toils. The immense picture, reduced to a moderate compass by the industry of those who, like the officers of the ancient kings of Persia, have been to us as so many eyes and ears, can now be taken in by the eye at a single glance. If, therefore, we succeed in forming an intelligible notion

of Hindoo character and manners, much of the credit will be due to the able enlightened travellers who have removed the obstacles which formerly obstructed the sight of philosophers, and by their united efforts placed the entire champaign, clothed in all its vivid variegated colours, before the sight.

From various causes, the greater number of which appear to have been in operation before the beginning of history, the national character of the Hindoos unites in its development great uniformity with the most striking variety; there being in every Hindoo, of every caste, some indescribable peculiarity denoting his affinity with his nation, while each of the innumerable tribes or hordes into which the vast mass of the population is divided, is distinguished by certain traits of manners peculiar to itself[1]. It would, however, be an endless as well as a useless task to describe all the more minute moral features which characterize the various small masses into which this great family of mankind is broken up. A brief recapitulation of the more striking and remarkable, and which, in most cases, are shared in common by the whole nation, is all that a well-regulated curiosity can require. We shall endeavour to trace the natural course of the life of a Hindoo, and examine his mode of acting, from his entrance into the world, until his spirit, according to his own creed, returns to the Being from whom it emanated, or is condemned to act over in a new body the drama of life again. The honest performance of this task will necessarily lead us to speak of customs and usages extremely different from our own, and

[1] "The shades of moral distinction," says Colonel Tod, "which separate these races, are almost imperceptible; while you cannot pass any grand natural barrier without having the dissimilarity of *customs* and *manners* forced upon your observation." Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 608.

therefore offensive to our tastes. The Hindoos are, in fact, a comparatively barbarous people. Their religion is intimately allied with grossness, cruelty, and licentiousness. The principle, therefore, which should refine and purify is there converted into an instrument of corruption. Nature is not even left to itself. The aid of art and of religious pageantries is called in to arouse passions which, beneath the burning sun of India, rush towards their object with uncontrollable impetuosity. For this reason the picture of Hindoo manners must be anything but a beautiful exhibition of pastoral innocence. Yet in so vast a scene it is not to be supposed that all is dark. Some sunny spots there are in this dismal wilderness, upon which the mind dwells with satisfaction.

Even before his birth the Hindoo is an object of solicitude to his parents. The pregnant mother is treated with great tenderness and indulgence, and ceremonies are performed to avert the influence of malignant spirits.

When the father first comes to visit his new-born offspring, he, as a good omen, puts some money into its hand, and all those relations who are present do the same. On the fifth day after her confinement, the mother bathes; and on the sixth, the goddess Shashthi is worshipped with peculiar rites in the shed where the child was born[2]. On the eighth day, that there may be as little intermission as possible in the ceremonies, eight kinds of parched pulse and rice, prepared within the house, are carried forth and sprinkled before the door, apparently as an offering to some divinity. These are immediately collected and eaten by the poor children of the neighbourhood. On the twenty-first day all the

[2] Ward's View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 155, &c. (third edition.)

women of the family assemble under the shade of a fig-tree, and again worship the goddess Shashthi; after which, if the infant be a male, the mother is regarded as pure; but if it be a female, her purification is not complete in less than a month.

As soon as the ceremonies of confinement are concluded, the father, whose opulence enables him to defray the expense of looking into futurity, immediately sends for an astrologer to cast the infant's nativity. The astrologer quickly obeys the summons. His astrolabe, his compasses, his stellar tables, his scrolls of cabalistical characters are laid before him; he inquires the exact moment of the child's birth, consults the stars, or the demons who preside over them, and then unfolds the roll of its destiny, describing in dark mysterious language the events of its future life, as far forward as he is paid for. This prophetic record the parents preserve as a treasure, and consult as often as any good or evil happens to their child. Some persons content themselves with recording the astrological or astronomical signs under which the infant is born. Others merely commit the date to writing. And the poor preserve no memorial whatever.

The child being born, and its fortunes regularly predicted by an astrologer, the next point is to bestow upon it a name. This, among the Hindoos, is a matter of great importance. The ceremony commonly takes place on the tenth or twelfth day after nativity[3], and the name selected is generally that of some god or goddess, (the repetition of the names of the gods being considered meritorious,) and never that of the father or mother. Sometimes the names of flowers or trees are given to children, as the Lily, the Rose, or the Palmyra; the choice being generally

[3] See Menu, chap. ii. ver. 30.

the privilege of the mother, while the father divulges the matter to his friends. On some occasions, probably when the mother desires to choose one name and the father another, two lamps are placed over two names beginning with the same letter, and fate is supposed to decide for that appellation over which the lamp burns most brightly. When parents have lost many children, whose names were soft-sounding and agreeable, they sometimes bestow upon the next child a name of harsh and rugged sound, hoping by this means to defeat the fatal effects of their neighbours' envy, to which they attribute their former misfortune. If the child survive to a certain age, imagining the danger to be over, they usually add some agreeable epithet to the original name.

Hindoo women suckle their children much longer than Europeans, and in fact may frequently be seen sitting down in the fields or before their doors with a child five or six years old standing beside them, drawing the breast. Until they are six months old children are fed entirely upon their mother's milk. Wet nurses are seldom employed. Very young children go naked, those of the rich until their second or third year, those of the poor until their sixth or seventh.

In many parts of Hindoostan children—or at least female children—are not regarded as a blessing. "When a female is born, no anxious inquiries await the mother—no greetings welcome the new comer, who appears an intruder upon the scene, which often closes in the hour of its birth. But the very silence with which a female birth is accompanied, forcibly expresses sorrow, and we dare not say that many compunctious visitings do not obtrude themselves on those who, in accordance with custom and imagined necessity, are thus compelled to violate the sentiments of nature. Families may

exult in the *Satis* which their cenotaphs pourtray, but none ever heard a Rajpoot boast of the destruction of his infant progeny[4]."

In his journey through Rajpootana and Guzerat, Bishop Heber was curious to collect information respecting the extent to which this infernal practice prevails at present. It was once hoped that the exertions of Major Walker, formerly Resident at Baroda, had in a great measure put a stop to it; but these hopes, it has since been discovered, were unfounded. "Unhappily, pride, poverty, and avarice are in league with superstition to perpetuate these horrors. It is a disgrace for a noble family to have a daughter unmarried, and still worse to marry her to a person of inferior birth, while they have neither the means nor the inclination to pay such portions as a person of their own rank would expect to receive with them. On the other hand, the sacrifice of a child is believed, surely with truth, to be acceptable to 'the evil powers,' and the fact is certain, that though the high-born Rajpoots have many sons, very few daughters are ever found in their palaces, though it is not easy to prove any particular instance of murder, or to know the way in which the victims are disposed of. The common story of the country, and probably the true one, for it is a point on which, except with the English, no mystery is likely to be observed, is that a large vessel of milk is set in the chamber of the lying-in woman, and the infant, if a girl, is immediately plunged into it. Sir John Malcolm, however, who supposes the practice to be on the decline, was told that a pill of opium was usually given. Through the influence of Major Walker it is certain that many children were spared, and previous to his departure from Guzerat, he received the most affecting compliment which a good

[4] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 636.

man could receive, in being welcomed at the gate of the palace, on some public occasion, by a procession of girls of high rank, who owed their lives to him, and who came to kiss his clothes and throw wreaths of flowers over him, as their deliverer and second father. Since that time, however, things have gone on very much in the old train, and the answers made by the chiefs to any remonstrances of the British officers is, 'Pay our daughters' marriage portions, and they shall live!' Yet these very men, rather than strike a cow, would submit to the cruellest martyrdom[5]."

Even in Ceylon we find traces of the same barbarous manners. "The horrible practice of female infanticide," says Mrs. Heber, "still prevails in some districts in the island; in the last general census, taken in 1821, the number of males exceeded by 20,000 that of the females; in one district there were to every hundred men but fifty-five women; and in those parts where the numbers were equal, the population was almost exclusively Musulman. The strange custom of one woman having two, or even more husbands, and the consequent difficulty of marrying their daughters, in a country where to live single is disgraceful, seem to be the causes of this unnatural custom. An astrologer is consulted on the birth of a female child, and if he pronounces her to have been born under evil auspices, she is exposed alive in the woods, to be destroyed by beasts of prey or by ants, generally, I was happy to hear, without the consent of the mother[6]."

The motive which prompts the Rajpoot to commit these murders is no doubt the same, as Colonel Tod remarks, as that which in barbarous Catholic countries studded the land with convents; but we can by no

[5] Heber's Journal, &c. vol. ii. p. 518, 519.
[6] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 178.

means agree with this author in considering the murder of a daughter less criminal than immuring her in a convent; nor can all our respect for the nobility or rank of the Hindoo warrior induce us to palliate in any way the enormity of the sacrifice which he imagines himself called upon to make to the pride of birth. "The Rajpoot," says Colonel Tod, "raises the poniard to the breast of his wife, rather than witness her captivity, and he gives the opiate to the infant, whom, if he cannot portion and marry to her equal, he dare not see degraded[7]." This, we think, is paying too much deference to the prejudices of a barbarian. The question, if the Rajpoot had the sagacity to discern it in its true light, is, whether he shall degrade himself into a sanguinary ruffian, with soiled conscience, and odious manners, or incur the risk—for it is at most but a risk—of seeing his daughters united in marriage to individuals less wealthy and distinguished than himself, or, which is always possible, eat their father's bread till Providence remove them from the world. Neither the Hindoo religion, cruel as it is, nor the Hindoo laws, authorize this barbarity. But the laws which regulate marriage among the Rajpoots powerfully promote child-murder. Intermarriage between persons of the same tribe, though centuries may have intervened since the branching off from the parent stock of the families to which the individuals respectively belong, is regarded as incest. Every tribe has therefore to look abroad, to a race distinct from its own, for suitors for the females. But this is not the principal cause. It is vanity, the vanity of a rude barbarian, who respects himself and imagines he is respected by others, exactly in proportion to the degree of vain empty pomp which he displays

[7] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 636.

on certain occasions, that is the real idol to which the Rajpoot offers up his daughters. Colonel Tod supposes that by the enactment of sumptuary laws the evil might be abated, if not extirpated; but adds that the Rajpoots were never sufficiently enamoured of despotism to permit it to rule within their private dwellings. "The plan proposed, and in some degree followed," says he, "by the great Jey Sing of Ambere, might with caution be pursued, and with great probability of success. He submitted to the prince of every Rajpoot state a decree, which was laid before a convocation of their respective vassals, in which he regulated the daeja or dower, and other marriage expenditure, with reference to the property of the vassal, limiting it to one year's income of the estate. This plan was however frustrated by the vanity of the Chondawut of Saloombra, who expended on the marriage of his daughter a sum even greater than his sovereign could have afforded; and to have his name blazoned by the bards and genealogists, he sacrificed the beneficent views of one of the wisest of the Rajpoot race. Until vanity suffers itself to be controlled, and the aristocratic Rajpoot submit to republican simplicity, the evils arising from nuptial profusion will not cease[8]."

But we gladly quit this painful topic, to describe the mode in which the business of education is conducted in Hindoostan. On this, as on most other points, the Hindoos differ exceedingly in their practice from the rest of mankind. The ordinary routine of education generally commences when the child has reached its fifth year, at which time it is taught by its father to write the alphabet, or sent for the purpose to the village school. In the families of the rich, governors are employed, who, besides

[8] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 637.

imparting the first principles of learning, endeavour to form and polish the manners, teaching the child how to conduct himself towards his parents, his friends, his spiritual teacher, &c. Though the Hindoo system of manners does not exact from children so rigid an observance of the maxims of filial piety as is required by the laws of China, the parental dignity is nevertheless guarded by numerous practices tending to inspire veneration and awe. The boy or youth who is taught from the cradle to address his father as "My Lord," his mother as "My Lady," on returning home from a visit or a journey, bows profoundly to his parents, and taking the dust, if there be any, from their feet, places, or seems to place it, on his head.

The characters of the alphabet are not learned, as in Europe, by being pointed out in a book, and having their names pronounced aloud. The boy first writes them with a stick or with his finger upon the ground; next upon a palm-leaf with an iron stylus or a reed; and lastly upon a green plantain leaf. From the simple characters he proceeds to the compound, to words, and the figures of arithmetic. During this period of their education, all the boys in the school, with a monitor at their head, stand up twice a day, and repeat their lessons. The schools open early in the morning, and close at sunset; but about four or five of the hottest hours of the day are given up to play and refreshment. Corporal punishment is permitted. Though their gains are small, the schoolmasters, who are all Sudras or Brahmins, are generally respectable men. While engaged in teaching they generally sit cross-legged, upon an antelope or tiger-skin, or on a mat of palm-leaves, spread upon the ground opposite their pupils; and their appearance and demeanour are grave and venerable.

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Hindoo School.

In the gardens or sacred groves, where the schools[9] are usually held, a statue of the Lingam, springing in a cylindrical form from a basin representing the Yoni, is commonly placed. Besides this figure, rude images of Ganesa and Saraswati, the god and goddess of learning and eloquence, are commonly set up at the vestibule of the school, and the students, as they enter, turn their eyes upon these images, and, raising their hands towards heaven, worship the gods, exclaiming as they pass, " Adoration to thee, thou true master !" or, addressing the two divinities, " May you be worshipped !"

The blessings of a superior education are very partially diffused in India, even among the Brahmins. Forbes met with a few of this priestly caste in Guzerat, who had studied at Benares, and understood Sanscrit ; but neither in that province, nor anywhere else in India, is an acquaintance with this language common. " Those towns on the banks of the Nerbudda, so famous," says he, " for Brahmin seminaries, contain numerous schools for the education of other boys : these are generally in the open air, on the shady side of the house. The scholars sit on mats or on cow-dung floors, and are taught as much of religion as their caste admits of, also reading,

[9] The Hindoo schools are not, like those of Europe, immense edifices, the sight of which, says Bartolomeo, might induce a Hindoo to believe that we were more anxious to possess great edifices than great men. " Les jeunes Indous," says he, " à moitié nuds se rassemblent partout, dans les jardins, sous les palmiers." *Voyage aux Indes Orientales*, tom. ii. p. 18. " The allowance of schoolmasters," says Ward, " is very small : for the first year, a penny a month, and a day's provisions. When a boy writes on the palm-leaf, twopence a month ; after this, as the boy advances in learning, as much as fourpence or eightpence a month is given." *View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. i. p. 161. Some of these masters teach gratuitously, or are paid by the temples. *Bartolomeo*, tom. ii. p. 20.

writing, and arithmetic ; the two latter by making letters and figures in sand upon the floor. Education, like every thing else among the Hindoos, is extremely simple; that of the girls is generally confined to domestic employments[10]."

The Abbé Dubois, who bestows his chief attention on the Brahmins, remarks that the proper business of a youth of this caste, before marriage, consists in a course of rigorous study, in a strict observance of the rules and discipline of his order. He is expected to show the utmost deference to his father and mother, and a ready obedience to the orders of his superiors. With regard to politeness in the ordinary intercourse of life, the Abbé's testimony is contradictory, sometimes attributing to his old friends the utmost ease and suavity of manners, at other times representing them as rude, gross, abusive, overbearing. Truth may lie between. However this may be, as soon as the young Brahmin has learned to read and write, "he is taught the Vedas, and the *mantras* (short prayers or invocations of the deities), which he gets by heart. He then advances to other sciences according to the degree of his docility and quickness of capacity. If he has the means of paying teachers, the study of the various idioms of India, and above all the Hinduvi, at least in the southern provinces, occupies the greater part of his leisure. During this immature period he is not to use betel, nor put flowers in his hair, nor ornament his body or forehead with sandal. Neither must he look at himself in a mirror. He must bathe daily, and offer the sacrifice of the *homa* twice a day. In short, his whole attention must be occupied in forming himself upon the true model of the institutions of his caste.

"It is not easy for children to live under such restraint, and accordingly very few are found who

[10] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 505, 506.

follow all that is prescribed to them. Nothing is more common, for example, than to see them with their foreheads decorated with sandal, and their mouths full of betel. And it is not likely that other rules which are prescribed on the points of form, should be better observed[11]."

The majority of modern Brahmins are ignorant of Sanscrit. And the majority of those who profess to acquire it resemble "the peasantry in the Catholic countries of Europe, who learn to read Latin that they may be able to chaunt the Psalms on Sundays at church." However, the Abbé, as well as Forbes, acknowledges the existence of a few Sanscrit scholars, and observes that there were some of them so disinterested as to teach the Vedas gratuitously to their disciples.

Among the praiseworthy habits inculcated by a Hindoo education, those which relate to the cleanliness of the person are the most remarkable. These habits, which belong to the Hindoo nation in general, who may be ranked among the cleanest nations in the world, more especially distinguish the Brahmins. But here, as elsewhere, we discover their invincible propensity to fall into extremes. If a Hindoo has been present at a funeral, he forthwith considers himself unclean, and, before he can return home, must purify his person by immersion in some pond or river. The very receiving of the news of the death of some relation, though at the distance of a thousand miles, renders him unclean, and the bathing of the person necessary[12].

Among the warlike tribes of Northern India, as among the ancient Greeks, music forms a part of education, and one of the principal amusements of

[11] Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 101.

[12] Ibid. p. 108, 109.

the Rajpoots, though it would be thought indecorous to be considered a performer. Homer describes Achilles as delighting in the music of the harp, and says,

> "With this he soothes his mighty soul, and sings
> Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings;"

and Chund, the Homer of Rajast'han, remarks of his hero, the Chohan, that he was "master of the art," both vocal and instrumental. "Whether profane music was ever common may be doubted; but sacred music was a part of early education with the sons of kings. Râma and his brothers were celebrated for the harmonious execution of episodes from the grand epic the Râmâyana. The sacred canticles of Jayadeva were set to music, and apparently by himself, and are yet sung by the Chobis. The inhabitants of the various monastic establishments chaunt their addresses to the deity, and I have listened with delight to the modulated cadences of the hermits, singing the praises of Pataliswara from their pinnacled abode of Aboo[13]."

The literary attainments of the Rajpoots, though by no means extensive, are generally sufficient to enable them to read their grants or agreements for "black-mail;" and they have proceeded one step beyond our English nobility in the reign of King John, when few of the barons were able to sign their names to the Magna Charta. Still we suspect that the intellect is but poorly cultivated among the Rajpoots. Colonel Tod thinks it high praise, in speaking of the Rana of Oodipoor, to say that he possesses an easy epistolary style; but admits that his ability is confined to the mere playing skilfully with words. It should be remembered, however, that the glory of India has departed from her. Nei-

[13] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 649, *note.*

ther her princes nor her people are now what they once were.

Nevertheless, considerable intellectual energy is from time to time exhibited by the rulers of Northern India. "The familiar epistolary correspondence of the princes and nobles of Rajast'han would exhibit abundant testimony of their powers of mind: they are sprinkled with classical allusions, and evince that knowledge of mankind which constant collision in society must produce. A collection of these letters, which exist in the archives of every principality, would prove that the princes of this country are upon a par with the rest of mankind, not only in natural understanding, but, taking their opportunities into account, even in its cultivation. The prince who in Europe could quote Hesiod and Homer with the freedom that the Rana does on all occasions Vyâsa and Vâlmîki, would be accounted a prodigy; and there is not a divine who could make application of the ordinances of Moses with more facility than the Rana of those of their great lawgiver Menu. When they talk of the wisdom of their ancestors, it is not a mere figure of speech. The instruction of their princes is laid down in rules held sacred, and must have been far more onerous than any European system of university education, for scarcely a branch of human knowledge is omitted. But the cultivation of the mind and the arts of polished life must always flourish in the ratio of a nation's prosperity, and from the decline of the one we may date the deterioration of the other with the Rajpoot. The astronomer has now no patron to look to for reward. There is no Jaya Sinha to erect such stupendous observatories as he built at Delhi, Benares, Oojein, and at his own capital; to construct globes and armillary spheres, of which, according to their own and our system, the Cotah prince has two, each

three feet in diameter. The same prince (Jaya Sinha) collated De la Hire's tables with those of Ulug Beg, and presented the result to the last emperor of Delhi, worthy the name of the great Mogul. To these tables he gave the name of Zîj Mohammed Shâhî. It was Jaya Sinha who, as already mentioned, sought to establish sumptuary laws throughout the nation to regulate marriages, and thereby prevent infanticide, and who left his name to the capital he founded, the first in Rajast'han.

"But we cannot march over fifty miles of country without observing traces of the genius, talent, and worth of past days; though, whether the more abstruse sciences, or the lighter arts which embellish life—all are now fast disappearing. Whether in the tranquillity secured to them by the destruction of their predatory foes, these arts and sciences may revive, and the nation regain its elevated tone, is a problem that time alone can solve[14]."

In Zalim Singh, the heir of Marwar, of whose history Colonel Tod gives the following outline, we have a favourable example of a cultivated Hindoo prince. "He was," says he, "the son of Rajah Beejy Singh, and a princess of Mewar; but domestic quarrels made it necessary to abandon the paternal for the maternal mansion, and a domain was assigned by the Rana which put him on a footing with his own children. Without neglecting any of the martial amusements and exercises of the Rajpoot, he gave up all those hours, generally devoted to idleness, to the cultivation of letters. He was versed in philosophical theology, astronomy, and the history of his country, and in every branch of poesy, from the sacred canticles of Jayadeva to the couplets of the modern bard, he was an adept. He composed and improvisoed with facility, and his

[14] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 650, 651.

residence was the rendezvous for every bard of fame. That my respected tutor did not overrate his acquirements, I had the best proof in his own; for all which (and he rated them at an immeasurable distance compared with the subject of his eulogy) he held himself indebted to the heir of Marwar, who was at length slain in asserting his right to the throne[15] in the desert." To complete this picture the following passage must be added. The writer, it will be seen, is an impassioned advocate of the Rajpoots; his views are almost exclusively directed towards the bright side of the picture; he even indulges occasionally in indignant sarcasms against his opponents; but his general knowledge, his experience, and, above all, his ability, confer peculiar value on his testimony. "After some discourse," says he, describing an interview which took place during his travels, "on the history of past days, with which, like every other respectable Rajpoot, I found him perfectly conversant, the Ganora chief took his leave, with the same courteous and friendly expressions. It is after such a conversation that the mind disposed to reflection will do justice to the intelligence of these people; I do not say this with reference to the baron of Ganora, but taking them generally. If by history we mean the relation of events in succession, with an account of the leading incidents connecting them, then are all the Rajpoots versed in this science: for nothing is more common than to hear them detail their immediate ancestry, or that of their prince for many generations, with the events which have marked their societies. It is immaterial whether he derives this knowledge from the chronicle, the chronicler, or both. It not only rescues him from the charge of ignorance, but suggests a comparison between him and those who constitute them-

[15] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 657.

selves judges of nationalities by no means unfavourable to the Rajpoot[16]."

To return, however, to the Brahmins, and the Hindoos in general. In his *seventh* or *ninth* year the youthful Brahmin is introduced, by the investiture with the Cord, into the sacred caste[17]. Previous to this he is regarded as no better than a Sudra, and little or no care appears to be taken to keep the priest from the husbandman, or the soldier from the artisan who fabricates his sword; though various circumstances concur to interrupt the familiarity of the children of very high and very low castes. The amusements of children are much the same in all countries. In all the love of war, which appears to be among the most powerful passions of our nature, is very early developed. They divide themselves into two parties, representing two hostile nations, with certain fixed boundaries, and endeavour to make incursions into each other's territories, without being caught. Others, following the example of their parents, addict themselves to low gambling, as dice, throwing cowries, &c. Kites, leaping, wrestling, or boyish imitations of idolatrous ceremonies, enter also into the catalogue of their amusements. It is a peculiarity of Hindoo manners[18] that youths frequently leave their home at a very early age, without the permission or knowledge of their parents, in order to perform a pilgrimage to some holy place, or for the purpose of bathing in the sacred waters of the

[16] Annals of Rajast'han, &c. p. 692.

[17] "In the eighth year from the conception of a Brahmin, in the eleventh from that of a Kshatriya, and in the twelfth from that of a Vaisya, let the father invest the child with the mark of his class." Menu, ii. 36, (Jones's Trans.) Dubois, Description of the People of India, p. 92.

[18] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 162, 163; Bartolomeo, Voyage aux Indes Orientales, tom. ii. p. 30.

Ganges. Of these boys some return in a few months; others never; but they generally write to inform their parents to what holy place they have betaken themselves[19].

The ceremony which constitutes the Brahmin youth a member of his sacred caste is remarkable. It is the commencement of his political life. Until this takes place, he is, in the estimation of the law, confounded with the vulgar herd, without privilege, without rank, little better than a nonentity. This is his investiture with the cord. According to the laws of Menu, which have not, however, been more scrupulously observed on this point than on many others, the Brahmin is to be distinguished from individuals of the secular classes by a *cord* (named *upavîta* in Sanscrit, in Bengali *paita*), which is worn depending from the left shoulder, and resting on the right side, below the loins. It consists of three thick twists of cotton, each formed of numerous smaller threads. These three separate twists, which, on marriage, are increased to *three times three*, are emblematical of the three great divinities,—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva,—who constitute the Trimurti, or "Hindoo Trinity."

The investiture with the cord is attended by considerable expense. The poorer Brahmins therefore, unable of themselves to furnish the necessary sums, have recourse to a contribution; and Hindoos of every caste are said to regard liberality on such occasions as an act of very great merit. The *paita* itself requires to be made with much care and with numerous ceremonies. To avoid the pollution which would be caused by the touch of impure hands, the cotton of which it is composed must be gathered from the plant by the hands of Brahmins only.

[19] Ward, *ubi supra.*

For the same reason it is to be spun and twisted by persons of the same caste.

When the *paita* has been properly manufactured, the father of the aspirant, who is thenceforward called *Brahmachâri*, commences by selecting, agreeably to the rules of astrology, the month, the week, the day of the week, and the minute of the day, most favourable for the performance of the ceremony. An entertainment is next to be prepared for the Brahmins, the materials of which are rice, peas, pumpkins, curdled milk, melted butter, cocoa, and the various kinds of fruit which happen to be in season. Betel in large quantities is to be provided, with pieces of new cloth for presents. New culinary utensils, both brazen and fictile, " unconscious of the fire," must likewise be procured; and these must never be used again. The ceremony and the entertainment continue four days, and at the close of each, gifts must be lavishly bestowed upon the guests. These, in general, are exceedingly numerous; for " an invitation is given to all the Brahmins, their relations and friends, to those who live in the place, and those who gave invitations on similar occasions of their own. In general, if any one were overlooked of those who have the right or the expectation of being invited, such a neglect would occasion disputes and animosities between the parties concerned that would rarely terminate but with life[20]."

The guest first invited is the *Purohita*, or priest. On the day appointed he comes, bringing along with him the *paita*, or cord, with a quantity of mango leaves, the sacred herb *darbha*, or *kusa*, and an antelope's skin to sit upon. The guests being all assembled, the Purohita begins by invoking the household god; the house itself having been pre-

[20] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 93.

viously purified, by the floor and interior of the walls being rubbed with cow-dung diluted with water, while the exterior is decorated, like the old houses of France and Italy, with broad perpendicular stripes in red earth. Most of the rites are performed under a temporary shed, erected with many ceremonies in the court before the house. While the priest is chaunting his *mantras*, or prayers, the statue of Vighnêswara, the "God of Obstacles," is placed under the shed. Instead of the image they in many cases merely set up a small cone of cow-dung, or mud, which the charms of the priest are supposed to transform into a god. To propitiate this deity, whose wrath is peculiarly dreaded, a sacrifice of incense, burning lamps, and grains of rice tinged with red, is then offered up before the statue or cone.

Next all the married women present, widows being excluded from all scenes of this kind, as their presence would be ominous of misfortune, remove from the assembly, and purify themselves by bathing. Some then proceed to prepare the feast, while others return to the pandal, where, having caused the young Brahmachâri to sit down on a small stool, and anointed him with oil, they bathe and dress him in a new garment. They next adorn him with several trinkets, put round his neck a string of coral beads, and bracelets of the same material on his arms. Lastly, they stain the edges of his eyelids with black.

The novice's father and mother now cause him to sit down between them, in the midst of the assembly, and the women perform on him the ceremony of the *Arati*[21]. They then chaunt in chorus

[21] This ceremony consists in placing upon a plate of copper a lamp made of paste of rice flour. When it has been supplied with oil and lighted, the women take hold of the plate with

the praises of the gods, with prayers for the young man's happiness. A sacrifice, consisting of betel, rice, and other kinds of food, is next offered up to the household god. The feast now commences. All the guests being seated in several rows, the women apart, and with their backs turned towards the men, the ladies of the house wait themselves upon the guests, and with their delicate fingers, spoons and forks being unknown, serve out the rice and other dishes. The plates are nothing but leaves of the banana or other trees, sewed together, and never used a second time.

Next day the invitations are renewed, and the company assembles as before. The father of the youth waits in person on each of his guests, bearing in his hand a cup filled with *akshata*, or stained rice, of which they take up a few of the grains, and stick them on their foreheads as an ornament. "The assembly being formed, the Brahmachâri with his father and mother all ascend the pile of earth thrown up beneath the shed, and seat themselves on three little stools. In the mean time the young man is bathed in the same manner as on the former day; they deck his brows with sandal and *akshata*, and gird his loins with a pure cloth, that is to say a cloth not handled since it was washed. All these ceremonies are accompanied with the songs of the women, the same as on the preceding day[22]."

These ceremonies concluded, the priest enters, bearing fire in an earthen vase, which he places upon the pile. Several mantras are then recited. After which the father of the novice advances, and offers

both hands, and raising it as high as the head of the person for whom the ceremony is performed, describe a number of circles in the air with the plate and the burning lamp. The intention of the *Arati* is to avert the effect of evil glances. Dubois, p. 86.

[22] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 95.

up a sacrifice to Fire and the Nine[23] Planets. The former, which is called the *homa*, the Brahmins alone have the privilege of performing. It is simply a fire, kindled with a kind of consecrated wood, into the flames of which they cast a little boiled rice sprinkled with melted butter. "The fire, thus consecrated, is afterwards carried into a particular apartment of the house, and kept up day and night with great care until the ceremony is ended. It would be considered a very inauspicious event, if for want of attention, or by any accident, it should happen to go out."

The women now come again upon the scene:—"Having procured a large copper vessel, well whitened over with lime, they go with it to draw water, accompanied with instruments of music. Having filled the vessel, they place in it perpendicularly some leaves of mango, and fasten a new cloth round the whole, made yellow with saffron water. On the neck of the vessel, which is narrow, they put a cocoa-nut stained with the same colour as the cloth. In this trim they carry it into the interior of the house, and set it on the floor upon a little heap of rice. There it is still farther ornamented with women's trinkets, after which the necessary ceremonies are performed to invite the god, and to fix him there. This perhaps is not the same as the god of the house, or rather it is the apotheosis of the vessel itself that is made in this case, for it actually becomes a divinity, receiving offerings of incense, flowers, betel, and other articles used in the sacrifices of the Brahmins.

[23] "The Hindoos reckon them nine, because, in addition to the seven which we admit with them, they add the increasing and waning moon, as two distinct planets. These nine are considered as malevolent deities; and they are generally sent by the magicians on the errand of tormenting the objects of their resentment." Dubois, p. 96.

Upon this occasion only, women act and perform the deification; and it appears that the divinity resident in the vessel is female. But however this may be, the mother of the Brahmachâri, taking up in her hands this new divinity, goes out of the house, accompanied by the other Brahmin women, visits the festival, preceded by musical instruments, and makes the circuit of the village, walking under a sort of canopy which is supported over the head. Upon returning home she sets the *vessel god*, which she has in her hands, where it was formerly stationed under the shed, and with the assistance of some of the other women, she fixes in honour of the god two new cloths on the pillars of the alcove near which it is placed[24]."

Having accomplished this ceremony, the women, who are fully employed and highly amused on those occasions, once more leave the house in search of mould from a nest of *karias*, or "white ants." With this they fill five small earthen vases, in which they sow nine sorts of grain, and moisten the whole with milk and water. These five vases are then converted by the mantras of the Brahmins into so many gods. The Pantheon being thus enriched with five new divinities, sacrifices of incense, rice, and betel are made to them, and the whole assembly bow down before the vases in adoration. The manes[25] of their ancestors are then invoked to be present at the feast. Then turning to the Brahmachâri, they bind on his arm a piece of bastard saffron with a yellow cord, the barber shaves his head, he is bathed, his brows are crowned with a

[24] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 96, 97.

[25] "The gods of their ancestors," according to Dubois; but we think it clear from the context that it should be rather the manes of their ancestors than their gods, who, in fact, were the same with their own. Description, &c. p. 97.

wreath of sandal leaves, and his loins are girt with a pure cloth.

A feast is now given to the young Brahmins, which is immediately succeeded by the most imposing ceremony which takes place during the investiture. "The father of the new Brahmin, having made the company retire to some distance, whilst he and his son are concealed behind a curtain, sits down upon the ground with his face turned towards the west, and making his son sit down beside him with his face towards the east, he whispers a deep secret in his ear, out of the mantras, and gives him other instructions analogous to his present situation. The whole is in a style which probably is little comprehended by the listener. Among other precepts, I am informed the father on one occasion delivered the following: 'Be mindful, my son, that there is one God only, the master, sovereign, and origin of all things. Him ought every Brahmin in secret to adore. But remember also, that this is one of the truths that must never be revealed to the vulgar herd. If thou dost reveal it, great evil will befall thee'[26]."

In the evening, the sacred fire which had been kindled on the first day, and preserved with superstitious care, is brought forth from the house, and placed beside the youth under the pandal, with songs and rejoicing. Mantras are recited, the women chaunt new songs, and the discordant sound of various instruments rends the air. Betel and presents are then distributed, and the rites are concluded, though the entertainments usually continue during two days more[27].

In India, as in almost all eastern countries, the youth of both sexes are strictly separated; hence

[26] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 98.

[27] Ibid. p. 91—99.

their usages relating to marriages offer many striking peculiarities. When it is known in his neighbourhood that a man has a daughter of a marriageable age, a lover very quickly presents himself; for in India few or no women are condemned to live in a state of celibacy. Sometimes both parties are infants, in which case the preliminaries are settled by the parents, who employ a *ghataka*, or "negotiator," to discover suitable partners for their children, and conduct the business of marriage. Among the Sudras boys are frequently married at the age of five years; the Brahmins, on the contrary, must delay the celebration of marriage until the boy, by the ceremony of the cord, has become a member of the sacred caste; that is, in general, until after his ninth year[28]. According to the common practice, however, sixteen is, among the Brahmins, the age at which a youth is expected to seek a wife; who, on her part, must not exceed the age of four or five years[29]. But, whatever may be the age of the contracting parties, the important business of courtship is generally transferred to a third person, who in most cases is the father of the lover.

When the youthful Brahmin, having completed his studies, expresses his desire to assume the rank of a married man, his father is directed by the laws to present him with a copy of the Vedas. Then the youth, decked with a garland of flowers, is to sit down on an elegant bed, and his father is to honour him with the gift of a cow, the symbol of Venus. The Hindoo legislator condescends to instruct the inexperienced novice in the choice of a partner. He cautions the lover against selecting a girl with *red*

[28] Ward, vol. i. p. 164. The age of *nine* years is fixed by the "Institutes of Menu" as the *earliest* at which a Brahmin may contract marriage. Chap. iii. ver. i.

[29] Dubois, Manners, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 100.

hair; from which we learn the fact that this coloured hair is sometimes found among Hindoo women. Neither should he choose a girl with no hair, or with too much; nor one deformed in her person; nor in delicate health; nor immoderately talkative; nor with inflamed eyes. But this is not all: the lover is to avoid a girl "with the name of a constellation, of a tree, or of a river, of a barbarous nation, or of a mountain, of a winged creature, a snake, or a slave, nor one with any name raising an image of terror. Let him choose for his wife a girl whose form has no defect, who has an agreeable name, who walks gracefully, like a phenicopteros or like a young elephant; whose hair and teeth are moderate respectively in quantity and size, whose body has an exquisite softness[30]."

When the father of the lover determines to commence his suit, he first takes care to ascertain that he is not likely to suffer the affront of a refusal. He then, having fixed upon a fortunate day, selects a number of small presents, as a cocoa-nut, a little saffron, fine bananas, and a piece of muslin for the ladies of the harem, and, with these in his hands, proceeds towards the house of the bride elect. Should any animal of evil omen, as a cat, a fox, or a serpent cross the path before him, he returns home, and postpones the visit to a more fortunate day. The proposal having been made, and the presents offered, the father of the girl defers his answer, until one of those small lizards which creep about old walls, uttering a faint shrill cry, has chirped a favourable omen. As soon, however, as the lizard has *spoken*, as they say, the maiden's father, persuaded that the gods are propitious, gives his consent; and after the performance of numerous ceremonies, equivalent to our betrothment, the nuptial

[30] Institutes of Menu, chap. iii. ver. 9, 10.

day is fixed. This important day, selected by the astrologers, generally falls in one of the four months, —March, April, May, and June,—which the ancient legislators of Hindoostan set apart, as it were, for the solemnization of marriage, though the ceremony may also take place, under certain circumstances, in November and February. The selection of the four summer months for the celebration of marriage is traced by some writers to superstitious, and by others to civil motives. The labours of the field being almost wholly suspended during that portion of the year, on account of the intense heat, more leisure, it is observed, is then afforded for the proper conducting of this important transaction.

The ceremonies attending the celebration of marriage are numerous, and in some instances not a little ludicrous. During the night preceding the nuptial day, the houses of the parents of both bride and bridegroom resound with rude loud music, and burning lamps are placed at the doors by women, who utter wishes for the happiness and long life of the youth and his consort. At the same time balls of rice paste are set up with joy and laughter by the ladies, who, towards the close of the night, eat rice with the bride and bridegroom. Early on the following morning, the ladies again assemble. The hilarity recommences. With burning lamps, a vessel of pure water, balls of rice flour, and a quantity of betel in their hands, they proceed to visit the neighbouring families, and present them with betel.

They then return home, and the rites are continued. After placing the future husband and wife upon a frame-work, or wicket, of bamboo, and thrice waving round their feet a wisp of lighted straw, the women take a ball of thread, and encompassing the bamboo frame-work four times, bind the betrothed

pair together, fastening one end of the thread on the right arm of the youth, and the left arm of the maiden, with a few blades of durva grass[31]. The bodies of the bride and bridegroom are next anointed with fragrant unguents. When these ceremonies are completed, little offerings, intended to secure the happiness of the betrothed, are made at the houses of both parents to the manes of their deceased ancestors. Presents of betel, fruit, and sweetmeats are then exchanged between the bride and bridegroom; and in the course of the afternoon their heads are shaved. Immediately after the performance of this part of the ceremony, a large stone is placed in the midst of a small artificial pond of water, surrounded by trees, in which are suspended lamps with wicks made of the fruit of the thorn-apple plant. Upon this stone the bridegroom stands, and the women, with the burning lamps, rice-balls, &c.; in their hands, approach him in mystic file, and successively touch his forehead with the various objects which they bear. The bride, bridegroom, and all the principal personages concerned, fast until the whole ceremony of the nuptials is completed[32].

In the marriages of persons of distinction, who expend vast sums on these occasions, the business is conducted with much pomp and splendour. In the night, and at a fortunate hour, the bridegroom, superbly dressed, glittering with golden ornaments,

[31] The sort of grass named *dúrvá* in Sanscrit, is, according to Wilson, the Agrostis linearis; according to Carey, the Panicum dactylon of Linnæus.

[32] Ward, vol. i. p. 170. "Le Brahme," says Bartolomeo, "fait agenouiller l'époux, lui met sur la tête une *romaglia* ou toque, une chaine d'or au cou, *un anneau d'or au doigt*, du sandal et du *councouma* au front, y traçant avec son doigt une demi-lune, astre qui est en grande vénération chez les Indous." Voyage aux Indes Orientales, tom. ii. p. 49.

and having a gorgeous crown upon his head, proceeds in a gilded palankeen to the dwelling of the bride. In the palankeen stand four servants, one at each corner, fanning him, or waving over his head a kind of brush made from the tail of the cow of Tartary[33]. Before him moves a long procession, consisting of servants bearing silver staves; a number of open carriages containing singers and dancing girls; horses, camels, and elephants richly caparisoned, one of which bears a huge metal drum, from which a loud hollow sound is elicited as the procession advances. The streets are illuminated by the flambeaux and tapers which the attendants carry in their hands, and by the numerous fireworks, placed on both sides of the road, which are discharged as they move along. Here and there among the crowd are several musicians, playing on various instruments. Since the conquest of India by the English, these musicians are frequently Europeans. Guns also are fired at intervals.

"At a marriage, the procession of which," says Ward, "I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived in Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of scripture, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.' All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession; some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared; but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade, something like the above, moved

[33] This brush is called *chamara*, because it is formed of the tail of the chamara, or wild cow (*Bos grunniens*), the hairs of which are exquisitely fine, and of a pale yellow tint. Asiat. Research. vol. iii, p. 560.

forwards to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area, before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed upon a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by seapoys. I and others expostulated with the doorkeepers, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment: 'And the door was shut!' I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment[34]."

These marriage processions, when passing through the village, in coming from a distance to the bride's house, are frequently attacked in the darkness by mischievous boys and young men; but such rencontres, begun in sport, sometimes terminate seriously with the loss of many lives. The bridegroom, as soon as he has entered the house, is undressed by his father-in-law, who then clothes him with new garments. He is then conducted into an inner apartment, and made to stand upon a stool, beneath which a cow's head and various other sacred things are buried in the earth. The bride is then brought in upon another similar stool, covered with the old garments of the bridegroom, and borne seven times round her future lord; after which they gaze upon each other, approach, and sit down together. The father-in-law then presents the bridegroom with fourteen blades of the fragrant kusa grass, pours water into the palm of his right hand, and reads a mantra or in

[34] View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 171, 172.

cantation over it. The water is then spilt on the ground. Other minute ceremonies follow. Then the officiating Brahmin, having directed the youth to put his hand into a vessel of water, approaches with the girl, and placing her hand upon that of her husband, binds them together with a garland of flowers. When the bride has been formally given and received, the garland of flowers is removed, while the father of the bride repeats the *Gâyatri*, or holiest verse of the Vedas. A kind of curtain is then drawn over the heads of the married pair, who once more regard each other; after which they are directed to bow to the Sâlagrâma and the company, and to invoke the blessing of the gods and Brahmins. During these ceremonies, portions of the *Misra*, a work on the various orders of the Hindoos, are rehearsed by the Ghatakas, and the foreheads of the guests marked with the powder of sandal wood. The bride and bridegroom are then fastened together by their garments, in token of union, and are then led back into the midst of the family[35].

Among a people who set little value upon time, ceremonies are always numerous; but although they may be amusing in the performance, the description of them is frequently tedious. We therefore omit several minute observances. But there are in different parts of the country variations in the marriage ceremonies, some of which should not, perhaps, be omitted. Among the Brahmins of Western India, the bridegroom, who in circumstances so important should be exempt from all sin, offers an expiatory gift to a person of his own order, which is supposed

[35] Ward, History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 163, 178; Dubois, Description of the People of India, p. 132, 146; Bartolomeo, Voyage aux Indes Orientales, tom. ii. p. 36, 78; Sonnerat, Voyage aux Indes, tom. i. p. 67, 85.

to purify him from all his transgressions. This act of charity is succeeded by a sort of interlude, which, as Dubois justly observes, appears very absurd in the midst of the marriage preparations. "The bridegroom feigns an eager desire to quit the country, upon a pilgrimage to Benares, to wash himself there in the sacred waters of the Ganges. He equips himself as a traveller, and being supplied with some provisions for the journey, he departs with instruments of music sounding before him, and accompanied by several of his relations and friends, in the same manner as when a person is really proceeding on that holy adventure. But no sooner has he got out of the village, than, upon turning towards the east, he meets his future father-in-law, who, learning the object of his expedition, stops him, and offers him his daughter in marriage, if he will desist from his journey. The pilgrim readily accepts the conditions, and they return together to the house[36]."

On his return the ceremonies proceed as already described. In the midst of them, the youth is directed to seat himself with his face towards the east; his future father-in-law then approaches him, and, looking steadily in his countenance, imagines he beholds before him the god Vishnu. Under this impression, the youth, thus transformed into a celestial being by mistake, is propitiated with sacrifice, and the comedy is continued by his having his feet washed with water and with milk mixed with cow-dung. The persuasion of his divinity now vanishes, and he is ordered to fix all his thoughts upon the deities, first collectively, afterwards separately. "To this invocation of the gods, he subjoins that of the seven famous penitents, the five virgins, the ancestor gods, the seven mountains, the woods,

[36] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 140, 141.

the seas, the eight cardinal points, the fourteen worlds, the year, the season, the month, the day, the minute, and many other particulars which must be likewise named and invoked[37]."

To this succeeds the joining of hands, and the libation of water, the primitive element, the symbol of Vishnu, over their united palms, by which the father solemnly resigns his daughter to her future lord. This ceremony, the most important of all, appears to be the foundation of the marriage. This being concluded, there follows another of but little inferior consequence. "All married women in India wear at their necks a small ornament of gold called *tahly*, which is the sign of their being actually in the state of marriage. When they become widows this ornament is removed with great form. There is engraved upon it the figure of Vighneswara, or of Lakshmi, or of some other divinity in estimation with the caste, and is fastened by a short string dyed yellow with saffron, composed of one hundred and eight threads of great fineness. Before tying it round the neck of the bride, she is made to sit down by the side of her husband, and, after some slight preliminary ceremonies, ten Brahmins make a partition with a curtain of silk, which they extend from one to another, between them and the wedded pair, while the rest are reciting the mantras, and invoking Brahma and Saraswati, Vishnu and Lakshmi, Siva and Parvati, and several more; always coupling each god with his consort. The ornament is now brought in to be fastened to the neck of the bride. It is presented on a salver, neatly decked and garnished with sweet smelling flowers. Incense is offered to it, and it is presented to the assistants, each of whom touches and invokes blessings upon it. The bride then turning

[37] Dubois, Description, p. 141.

towards the east, the bridegroom takes the tahly, and reciting a mantra aloud, binds it round her neck.

"Fire is then brought in, the bridegroom offers up sacrifice, and taking his bride by the hand, they walk thrice round the fire while the incense is blazing. He then stoops down, and taking the bride by the ankle, touches her with a small *sandal stone*, so called because it is made with paste of that odoriferous wood. During this ceremony it is prescribed that he shall have his thoughts fixed upon the 'Great Mountain of the North,' the original country of the Brahmins. After this two baskets of bamboo, regarded as the most pure of all wood, are brought in and placed close together. The bride and bridegroom step each into one of these baskets, where they stand upright. Two other baskets, filled with ground rice, are then introduced, of which one is delivered to each of the married pair, who alternately pour the contents over each other's heads, until they are weary. Among some castes this part of the rites is performed by the attendants. It is meant to be an omen of their good fortune. In the marriage of great princes and Rajas, baskets of pearls are sometimes used during this ceremony instead of corn[38]."

On the fourth day of the festival the bridegroom and bride eat together from the same plate, in token of the most intimate union. But, during their whole lives, this is the first and last time, says Dubois, they ever sit down to a meal together[39]. "On the

[38] Dubois, Description of the People of India, p. 141, 143.

[39] During his residence in the Maldive Islands, Ibn Batuta, who had there married several wives, endeavoured to prevail on these ladies to honour him with their presence at table, but could never succeed. It was contrary to custom. See Travels of Ibn Batuta, p. 179. "To eat from the same

last day a ceremony is practised remarkable for its singularity. When the husband offers the sacrifice of the *homa*, and when in the usual form he is casting into the fire the boiled rice sprinkled with melted butter, the bride approaches and does the same on her part with rice that has been parched. This is the only instance that I know where a woman takes part in this sacrifice, which is the most sacred and solemn of all, except the Yajna[40]."

These various ceremonies being concluded, and the marriage regarded as complete, the bride and bridegroom sleep upon the same mat, and rising up in the morning, proceed, after the performance of various new ceremonies, to their future home. The rites, however, are not yet exhausted. The husband's mother, with all the ladies of the family, now approaches the bride, muttering incoherent sounds, and having placed a fish in the folds of her garments, and put sweetmeats into the mouths of the bridal pair, pours milk mixed with red lead upon the young lady's feet, and places a measure of corn upon her head. They all then proceed into the interior of the house, the husband taking corn from the basket on his wife's head, and scattering it about as he moves. A burnt sacrifice is next offered, and the husband and wife take a small

platter" has always been a mark of peculiar affection in the East. Colonel Tod, a curious and original observer of manners, describes the recognition of the rank of a prince of Cheetore, who had been nursed and educated in obscurity, by the practice of this custom. "A court was formed, when the faithful Assa Sah resigned his trust, and placed the prince of Cheetore 'in the lap of the Cotario Chohan,' as the 'great ancient' among the nobles of Mewar, who was throughout acquainted with the secret, and who, to dissipate the remaining scruples which attached to the infant's preservation, 'ate off the same platter with him.'" Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 317.

[40] Dubois, p. 144.

quantity of parched rice, and a number of the leaves of the *shami* tree (*Acacia suma*) in their hands, while the wife exclaims, "I am come from the family of my father into your family; and now my life and all I have are yours." The husband then walks seven times round a fire altar, invoking the god of that element to be witness of his vows, casts the rice into the flames, and taking up a little clarified butter, which is afterwards also thrown into the flames, replies to his wife, "Your heart is in mine, and my heart is in yours, and both are one." He then draws a veil over her face, to denote that henceforward he alone has the right to look upon her; and with a few additional rites, which need not be described, the festival of marriage concludes.

Among the warlike Rajpoots, who preserve more of the customs of their ancestors than any other tribe of Hindoos, the princes frequently allow their daughters to choose their own husbands[41]. The father, like Tyndarus of old, invites a number of princes to his court, where they are amused and entertained with feasting and mirth. The princess, who beholds the youthful assembly, consults her eyes, and is united to the object of her preference[42]. Alluding to this remarkable custom, Colonel Tod observes: "The romantic history of the Chohan

[41] This public choice of a husband by a princess from a number of suitors assembled for the purpose, is in Sanscrit called *Swayamvara*. Several instances of this ceremony are mentioned in the old epic poems of the Hindoos. See the Raghuvansa of Câlidâsa, chap. vi. (Stenzler's edition, London, 1832, p. 38, &c.), and the episode of Nala and Damayanti from the Mahâbhârata, chap. v. (Bopp's second edition, Berlin, 1832, p. 26, &c.) See also the Institutes of Menu, chap. ix. ver. 90.

[42] The Purânas, cited by Ward, vol. i. p. 164.

emperor of Delhi abounds in sketches of female character, and in the story of his carrying off Sunjogta, the princess of Canouj, we have not only the individual portrait of the Helen of her country, but in it a faithful picture of the sex. We see her from the moment when rejecting the assembled princes, she threw the garland of marriage round the neck of her hero, the Chohan, abandon herself to all the influences of passion—mix in a combat of five days' continuance against her father's array, witness his overthrow, and the carnage of both armies, and subsequently, by her seductive charms, lulling her lover into a neglect of every princely duty. Yet, when the foes of his glory and power invade India, we see the enchantress at once start from her trance of pleasure; and exchanging the softer for the sterner passions, in accents not less strong because mingled with deep affection, she conjures him, while arming him for the battle, to die for his fame, declaring that she will join him in the 'mansions of the Sun' [43]."

To this we cannot resist the temptation to add another illustrative and highly striking anecdote from the annals of Jessulmere, the most remote of the Rajpoot states, and forming an oasis in the heart of the desert. "Raningdeo was lord of Poogul, a fief of Jessulmere; his heir, named Sadoo, was the terror of the desert, carrying his raids even to the valley of the Indus, and on the east to Nagore. Returning from a foray, with a train of captured camels and horses, he passed by Aureent, where dwelt Manik Rao, the chief of the Mohils, whose rule extended over one thousand four hundred and forty villages. Being invited to partake of the hospitality of the

[43] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 623.

Mohil, the heir of Poogul, attracted the favourable regards of the old chieftain's daughter:

> 'She loved him for the dangers he had passed;'

for he had the fame of being the first riever of the desert. Although betrothed to the heir of the Rahtore of Mundore, she signified her wish to renounce the throne to be the bride of the chieftain of Poogul; and in spite of the dangers he provoked, and contrary to the Mohil chief's advice, Sadoo, as a gallant Rajpoot, dared not reject the overture, and he promised to accept the *coco*, if sent in form to Poogul. In due time it came, and the nuptials were solemnized at Aureent. The dower was splendid; gems of high price, vessels of gold and silver, a golden bull, and a train of thirteen devadhâris, or damsels of wisdom and penetration. Irrinkowal, the slighted heir of Mundore, determined on revenge, and with four thousand Rahtores planted himself in the path of Sadoo's return, aided by the Sankla Mehraj, whose son Sadoo had slain. Though entreated to add four thousand Mohils to his escort, Sadoo deemed his own gallant band of seven hundred Bhattis sufficient to convey his bride to his desert abode, and with difficulty accepted fifty, led by Megraj, the brother of the bride. The rivals encountered at Chondun, where Sadoo had halted to repose; but the brave Rahtore scorned the advantage of numbers, and a series of single combats ensued, with all the forms of chivalry. The first who entered the lists was Jeytanga, of the Pahoo clan, and of the kin of Sadoo. ..... The son of Chonda, admiring his *sang froid*, and the address with which he guided his steed, commanded Joda Chohan, the leader of his party, to encounter the Pahoo. Their two-edged swords soon clashed in combat; but the gigantic Chohan fell

beneath the Bhatti, who, warmed with the fight, plunged amidst his foes, encountering all he deemed worthy his assault.

"The fray thus begun, single combats and actions of equal parties followed, the rivals looking on. At length Sadoo mounted: twice he charged the Rahtore ranks, carrying death on his lance; each time he returned for the applause of his bride, who beheld the battle from her car. Six hundred of his foes had fallen, and nearly half his own warriors. He bade her a last adieu, while she exhorted him to fight, saying, "she would witness his deeds, and if he fell, would follow him even in death.' Now he singled out his rival, Irrinkowal, who was alike eager to end the strife, and blot out his disgrace in his blood. They met; some seconds were lost in a courteous contention, each yielding to his rival the first blow, at length dealt out by Sadoo, on the neck of the disappointed Rahtore. It was returned with the rapidity of lightning, and the daughter of the Mohil saw the steel descend on the head of her lover. Both fell prostrate to the earth; but Sadoo's soul had sped, the Rahtoore had only swooned. With the fall of the leaders the battle ceased; and the fair cause of strife, Corumdevi, at once a virgin, a wife, and a widow, prepared to follow her affianced. Calling for a sword, with one arm she dissevered the other, desiring it might be conveyed to the father of her lord,—'tell him such was his daughter.' The other she commanded to be struck off, and given with her marriage jewels thereon, to the bard of the Mohils. The pile was prepared on the field of battle; and taking her lord in her embrace, she gave herself up to the devouring flames. The dissevered limbs were disposed of as commanded; the old Rao of Poogul caused the one to be burnt, and a tank was exca-

vated on the spot, which is still called after the heroine, 'the lake of Corumdevi'[44]."

Having thus described the numerous grotesque ceremonies which accompany the solemnization of marriage, we proceed to the consideration of a more difficult subject—the subject of polygamy. It would be easy to follow the example of the ordinary historians of Hindoo manners, in substituting the commandments of the law for the practices of the people; but this would be to show, not what the Hindoos are, and always have been, but what their legislators endeavoured, many thousands of years ago, to render them. The manners of the Hindoos were never, as we have already observed, conformable to the precepts of their lawgivers, which, like the sanguinary institutions of Draco, were in a great measure neglected as soon as promulgated. In fact, enduring political institutions are the effect, not the cause, of national character; and, like the garments which we wear, rather adjust themselves to the figure of the substance around which they are flung, than mould or modify it to correspond with their own form. For this reason, all such institutions as are not congenial to the character and temper of the people for whom they are framed, are quickly thrown aside, or so greatly modified as to be no longer the same things.

In Hindoostan, as in other countries, men have always endeavoured to reconcile the dictates of passion with those of reason, and have thus been guilty of considerable inconsistency and extravagance. In those early stages of society, when the refinements of love are altogether unknown, offspring is the primary, if not the sole aim of marriage. Men would naturally be disappointed and dissatisfied, therefore, whenever their wives were barren; and the desire would arise of forming a new connection with some

[44] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 627, 629.

other woman. But, as during long and close intimacy habits of affection and mutual attachment would generally be engendered, the man would be unwilling to discard the companion of his bosom; and the woman, on her part, being no less desirous of offspring than her husband, would consent, like Sarah, to the introduction of a new spouse into the family, over whom, from greater maturity of years, and the habit of influencing her husband's affections, she would maintain, under almost all circumstances, a natural and decided superiority. Such appears to have been the origin of polygamy, both in India and every other country where it has prevailed; and though other reasons may have contributed to prolong and extend its influence, the desire of offspring was doubtless one of its principal causes.

This view of the question is perfectly borne out by experience. Though polygamy, observes Bartolomeo, be permitted by the Hindoo laws for the sake of children, when a man marries several wives there is always a chief wife of the husband's own caste, who manages the household affairs. She is called, "the united"—"the principal"—"the superior"—"the mother of the family," &c., the others are denominated *upastrî* or *bhogyâ*, i. e. concubines[45]. The children of the first are the legitimate heirs; those of the inferior wives, among the higher orders, being from the moment of their birth considered as belonging to one or the other of the mixed castes, from which these secondary wives are generally taken. Kings who have no wife of their own caste have, therefore, no legitimate heirs[46]. Notwithstanding the permission of the law, it is uncommon

[45] The chief rule belongs of right to the first wife, according to the Sâstra; but this authority is sometimes set aside. Ward, vol. i. p. 180.

[46] Bartolomeo, Voyage aux Indes Orientales, tom. ii. p. 38.

here as well as in Turkey to find a man with more than one wife, if you except the princes[47], and certain profligate Brahmins, who sometimes marry a host of wives, in different parts of the country, and wandering about from one to the other, quarter themselves upon the families of these women, who, for the most part, lead no less abandoned lives than their husbands.

But upon the question of polygamy, the opinion of writers is not quite unanimous. The Abbé Dubois, who is said to have passed upwards of thirty years of his life in the Mysore, maintains, that by the laws of India men are restricted to *one wife*. "I have taken great pains," says he, "to learn what is the real spirit of Hindoo jurisprudence on the subject of polygamy, and the indissolubility of marriage; and although I have not arrived at any absolute certainty, all that I have observed appears to demonstrate that the former is prohibited, and the latter established. Persons well acquainted with the usages of the country have confirmed me in this conclusion, and have assured me that if there be many instances of polygamy, particularly among the great, who are suffered to have a plurality of wives, yet it is really an abuse and an open violation of the customs of the Hindoos, among whom marriage has always been confined to couples, though in all places the powerful will set themselves above the law[48]." This view

[47] "The number of queens," says Colonel Tod, "is determined only by state necessity and the fancy of the prince. To have them equal in number to the days of the week, is not unusual; while the number of *handmaids* is unlimited. It will be conceded, that the prince who can govern such a household, and maintain equal rights, when claims to pre-eminence must be perpetually asserted, possesses no little tact. The government of the kingdom is but an amusement compared with such a task, for it is within the Rawula (Harem) that intrigue is enthroned." Annals of Rajast'han, p. 307.

[48] Description, &c. p. 135.

of the subject he ingeniously maintains by bringing forward the example of the gods; none of whom, he remarks, are represented with more than one wife. It would seem, however, that the Abbé has mistaken the state of the question. Polygamy, as we have already observed, was never, by the laws of any country, permitted, except for the sake of progeny; and for this cause it is still allowed in Hindoostan. "I know of *one case only*," he observes, "where a man already married may lawfully espouse a second wife; which is, when the first bears him no children. But even in this case, the consent of the first wife is necessary, and she always continues to be considered as the man's principal wife, and as superior to the second. Neither is this second marriage conducted with half the ceremony as the former[49]."

Ward, who appears reluctant to admit any thing which can make in favour of the Hindoos, confesses that, in general, it is for the sake of progeny only that men marry second wives; and that, even then, they are seldom the first movers in the matter. "If a man," says he, "should not have children, his father or elder brother seeks for him a second wife; few take this trouble on themselves." It is, in fact, a saying among the Hindoos, that a man should wait till his first wife is more than twenty, that is, almost past child-bearing, before he thinks of a second. They see the misery almost invariably arising in families from a plurality of wives, and even prefer in most cases descending childless to the grave, great as this misfortune is considered to be, to the risk of passing their lives in perpetual misery[50]. Celibacy, however, is so disreputable among the Hindoos, that a man who loses his wife rarely remains many days a

[49] Description of the Manners, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 136.

[50] Ward, vol. i. p. 180; Dubois, p. 136; Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 76.

widower. Should this misfortune happen to him a second time, he encounters some difficulty in finding a wife, because such a marriage is thought baneful to the female. To obviate this objection, however, he betroths himself to *a tree*, upon which the threatened evil falls, and the tree immediately dies[51]. According to the Sâstra, fifty is the age beyond which a man is not permitted to marry; but this text of their scriptures the Brahmins disregard.

But of all the Hindoo customs connected with marriage, those which prevail among the Nairs, or pure Sudras of the Malabar coast, are unquestionably the most extraordinary. Here the order of things which usually obtains among barbarians is reversed. The woman, instead of being a timid, delicate, secluded thing, existing as one among many in the harem of her lord, stalks boldly forward into society, and setting at defiance the modesty natural to her sex, lives publicly, without shame, as the common mistress of a whole family, or rather of the whole caste. "It is," observes Dr. Buchanan, "no kind of reflection on a woman's character to say, that she has formed the closest intimacy with many persons; on the contrary, the Nair women are proud of reckoning among their favoured lovers many Brahmins, Rajas, or other persons of high birth: it would not appear, however, that this want of restraint has been injurious to population. When a lover receives admission into a house, he commonly gives his mistress some ornaments, and her mother a piece of cloth; but these presents are never of such value as to give room for supposing that the women bestow their favours from mercenary motives. To this extraordinary custom may perhaps be attributed the total want, among its inhabitants, of that penurious disposition so common among the Hindoos. All

[51] Ward, vol. i. p. 181.

the young people vie with each other, who shall look best, and who shall secure the greatest share of favour from the other sex, and an extraordinary thoughtlessness concerning the future means of subsistence is very prevalent."

In consequence of this strange state of society, no Nair, continues this traveller, knows his own father. "Every man looks upon his sister's children as his heirs. He indeed looks upon them with the same fondness that fathers in other parts of the world have for their own children; and he would be considered an unnatural monster, were he to show such signs of grief at the death of a child, which from long cohabitation and love for its mother he might suppose to be his own, as he did at the death of a child of his sister. A man's mother manages his family, and after her death his eldest sister assumes the direction. Brothers almost always live under the same roof; but if one of the family separates from the rest, he is always accompanied by his favourite sister. Even cousins to the most remote degree of kindred, in the female line, generally live together in great harmony; for in this part of the country, love, jealousy, or disgust, never can disturb the peace of a Nair family. A man's moveable property, after his death, is divided equally among the sons and daughters of all his sisters. His landed estate is managed by the eldest male of the family; but each individual is entitled to a share of the income. In case of the eldest male being unable from infirmity or incapacity to manage the affairs of the family, the next in rank does it in the name of his senior[52]."

Cicero observes that there is no opinion so absurd but that some philosopher or another may be found to defend it. In like manner, there is no custom,

[52] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. ii. p. 411, 412.

however monstrous, which an ingenious writer will not undertake to assign a competent reason for. Accordingly, we find the polyandrism of the Nair women, which is merely a relic of those barbarous manners prevalent among many ancient nations, converted by Montesquieu into a politic regulation, preservative of hardihood and valour. "In this tribe," says he, "the men can have but one wife; while a woman, on the contrary, is allowed many husbands: the origin of this custom is not difficult to discover. The Nairs are a tribe of nobles[53] who are the soldiers of the nation: in Europe soldiers are not encouraged to marry: in Malabar, where the climate requires greater indulgence, they are satisfied with rendering marriage as little burdensome as possible. They give one wife among many men; which consequently diminishes the attachment to a family, and the cares of house-keeping, and leaves them in the free possession of a military spirit."

Having thus far examined that chain of circumstances, along which the Hindoo proceeds from

[53] We have here an example of the extremely imperfect state of our knowledge respecting the Hindoo castes. If the Nairs are the *nobles* and the *soldiers* of the nation, then war and military affairs are not exclusively assigned to the Kshatriyas, for the Nairs are Sudras. Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 408. This author observes, however, that though they all *pretend* to be born soldiers, in reality they are of various ranks and professions. The Sudras, we find, have here as elsewhere escaped from the service of the "twice-born," and acquired the highest honours and distinctions. "On all public occasions these (the *Kirit Nairs*) act as cooks, which, among Hindoos, is a sure mark of *transcendent rank;* for every person can eat the food prepared by a person of higher birth than himself." Buchanan, *ubi supra.*—Forbes, who accidentally surprised a Nair girl bathing in a tank, says that, aware of her *high caste,* he did not attempt to speak to her. Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 380.

infancy to manhood, we shall now observe the condition of his helpmate, which, according to the ordinary opinion, is very far from being an enviable one. It will, perhaps, be admitted that it would be a task more easy of accomplishment to adopt the notions already established, and to adduce quotations, which may be found ready made in every compilation, in support of them, than in any way to call those notions in question; for in this case no little labour and original research are required. However, as we have long doubted the accuracy of those pictures which represent the women of Hindoostan as mere slaves, we shall now place before the reader the reason of those doubts, and then leave him to determine whether he will prefer the notions at present prevailing to the adopting of a more moderate opinion. Too much, however, must not be expected. In every point of view the Hindoos are greatly behind the English, and several other European nations, in civilization and refinement. It is not, therefore, to be supposed that on that particular point which regards the treatment of the female sex, they should be on a par with us. We merely advance that women are not reduced in India to that miserably degraded condition in which they are commonly believed to be immersed.

Too much stress, we think, is laid by Mr. Mill[54], in considering this question, on the authority of the 'Institutes of Menu.' If these laws ever were rigidly obeyed, which, as we have already shown, there is great reason to doubt, they were soon found, as man advanced in the career of civilization, to be incompatible with the well-being of society, and allowed, without a formal abrogation, to fall by degrees into desuetude. "The learned Hindoos," says Sir William Jones, "are unanimously of opinion that many

[54] History of British India, vol. i. p. 388, 389.

laws enacted by Menu, their oldest reputed legislator, were confined to the three first ages of the world, and have no force in the present, in which a few of them are certainly obsolete[55]." More, perhaps, than a few are obsolete; but the principal of those which are acknowledged to be so regard, in one way or other, the condition of the fair sex.

The Abbé Dubois, whose authority has frequently been insisted on in the consideration of this question, observes:—"What I have to relate concerning the Brahmanâris, or Brahmin women, will equally apply to other individuals of the sex in different castes. Yet there is but little to be said concerning the Hindoo women, from the small consideration in which they are held. Always treated as if they were created for the mere enjoyment of the men, or for their service, they are supposed to be incapable of acquiring any degree of the mental capacity which a greater ascendant in society would surely confer upon them, by rendering them of more importance in the affairs of life. But they are so low in estimation, that when a man has done anything reprehensible, it is quite proverbial to say that he has acted in the spirit of a woman. She, on the other hand, as an excuse for any fault, lays all the blame on the natural inferiority of her sex[56]."

The most extraordinary part of the matter is, that the Hindoo women, from some strange perversity of taste, or, according to the Abbé, from the effect of custom, have absolutely imbibed a sort of passion for ill treatment, and would with scorn repel anything like an approach to tenderness or affection. "They would," he assures us, "despise their husbands if they treated them with easy familiarity. I have seen

[55] General Note on the Institutes of Menu, Works, vol. viii. p. 152. Haughton's edition of Menu, vol. ii. p. 428.

[56] Description, &c.

a wife in a rage with her husband for talking with her in an easy strain. 'His behaviour covers me with shame,' quoth she, 'and I dare no longer show my face. Such conduct amongst us was never seen till now. Is he become a *Paranguay* (a Frank), and does he suppose me to be a woman of that caste[57]?'" But if the Hindoos treat their wives harshly or with indifference, or exhibit contempt for the sex in general, they are careful, it seems, to conceal their conduct; for, though women are generally despised, it appears to be no less generally the fashion to regard such disparagement as highly disreputable; since women "receive," says the Abbé, "the highest respect in public!"

"Married women," says Menu, "must be honoured and adorned by their fathers and brethren, by their husbands, and by the brethren of their husbands, if they seek abundant prosperity. Where females are honoured, there the deities are pleased, but where they are dishonoured, there all religious acts become fruitless.

[57] Description, &c. p. 219. Bishop Heber, however, heard from the most competent judges, a very different story. Describing his conversation with Mr. Warner, magistrate of the Farreedpoor district, "he spoke favourably," says he, "of the general character of the people, who are, he said, gentle, cheerful, and industrious, these great crimes (decoitry, &c.) being, though unhappily more common than in Europe, yet certainly not universal. He had learned, from different circumstances, more of the internal economy of the humbler Hindoo families than many Europeans do, and had formed a favourable idea of their domestic habits and happiness. As there is among the cottagers no seclusion of women, both sexes sit together round their evening lamps in very cheerful conversation, and employ themselves either in weaving, spinning, cookery, or in playing at a kind of dominos. He says it is untrue that the women, in these parts at least, are ignorant of sewing, spinning, or embroidery, inasmuch as, while the trade of Dacca flourished, the sprigs, &c. which we see on its muslins, were very often the work of female hands." Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 217, 218.

Where female relations are made miserable, the family of him who makes them so very soon wholly perishes; but where they are not unhappy, the family always increases. On whatever houses the women of a family, not being duly honoured, pronounce an imprecation, those houses with all that belong to them utterly perish, as if destroyed by a sacrifice for the death of an enemy. Let those women, therefore, be continually supplied with ornaments, apparel and food, at festival and jubilees, by men desirous of wealth. In whatever family the husband is contented with his wife, and the wife with her husband, in that house will fortune be assuredly permanent [58]."

Whatever may be the present practice of the Hindoos, it was customary, we learn, in the time of the compiler of the 'Institutes,' for the husband and wife, on certain occasions at least, to *eat together.* Having given directions respecting the practice of hospitality, which we shall cite hereafter, the legislator observes:—"To others, as familiar friends, and the rest before named, who come with affection to his place of abode, let him serve a repast *at the same time with his wife and himself*, having amply provided it according to his best means [59]."

The following texts also, though the expressions be rough and uncourtly, seem to be conceived in the spirit of real humanity and tenderness for the female sex. They conclude with another allusion to the practice which then prevailed of husband and wife eating together:—"To a bride, to a damsel, to the sick and to pregnant women, let him give food, even before his guests, without hesitation. The idiot who first eats his own mess, without having presented food to the persons just enumerated, knows not while he crams, that he will himself be food after death for ban-

[58] Institutes, &c. chap. iii. ver. 55—60.

[59] Chap. iii. ver. 113.

dogs and vultures. After the repast of the Brahmin guest, of his kinsmen, and his domestics, the married couple may eat what remains untouched[60]."

Anxious to repress all disposition to domestic strife, the legislator afterwards observes:—"With his mother herself, or with his father, with his kinswomen, and his brother, with his son, his wife, or his daughter, and with his whole set of servants, let him have no strife. Children, old men, poor dependants and sick persons, must be considered as rulers of the pure ether; his elder brother, as equal to his father; his wife and son, as his own body. His assemblage of servants, as his own shadow; his daughter as the highest object of tenderness: let him therefore, when offended by any of these, bear the offence without indignation[61]."

Coming afterwards to speak of women more particularly, the law-giver observes:—"The mouth of a woman is constantly pure." He decides, indeed, that no woman, whatever may be her age or condition, is to act "according to her *mere pleasure*[62]." But he is here considering her as the member of a family, as a person surrounded by others who have rights to be respected as well as herself; in short, as a citizen of the domestic republic, who should, under no circumstances, look solely to *self*, but have a regard in all she does to the welfare of those with whom she is to pass her life, and whose happiness or misery must be deeply affected by her actions. With regard to the state of dependence to which she is said to be condemned, little need be said. Woman is everywhere dependent on man, and has been so from the beginning: "Thy desire," says the Scripture, "shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." But from

[60] Institutes of Menu, chap. iii. ver. 114—116.
[61] Chap. iv. ver. 180, 184, 185.
[62] Chap. v. ver. 147—169.

this very circumstance is her power over the heart, and consequently her happiness, derived. Remove her from this position, convert her into a kind of man, and you in the same proportion destroy her power as a woman, to substitute in its stead something not half so desirable; and which is even inconsistent with the existence of political society.

To quit the 'Institutes of Menu,' of which, as we have shown, an imperfect view is too generally taken, and descend to the conduct of the present Hindoos towards women; we are assured by an author of no mean authority[63] that, in no point does the Rajpoot resemble the ancient German and Scandinavian tribes more than in his delicacy towards females. The ancient Germans, as we learn from Tacitus, were accustomed, in affairs of the utmost moment, to consult their wives, to whose opinions great weight was usually attached. The martial tribes of India do the same. Speaking of what he terms the "Feudal System" of Mewar, Colonel Tod remarks that "adoptions are often made during the life of the incumbent when without prospect of issue. The chief and his wife first agitate the subject in private; it is then confided to the little council of the fief, and when propinquity and merit unite, they at once petition the prince to confirm their wishes, which are generally acceded to. On sudden lapses the wife is allowed the privilege, in conjunction with those interested in the fief, of nomination, though the case is seldom left unprovided for; there is always a presumptive heir to the smallest sub-infeudation of these

[63] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 70. Elsewhere the same writer remarks:—"If devotion to the fair sex be admitted as a criterion of civilization, the Rajpoot must rank high. His susceptibility is extreme, and fires at the slightest offence to female delicacy, which he never forgives." p. 276.

estates. The wife of the deceased is the guardian of the minority of the adopted. The chief of Deoguih, one of the sixteen Omras of Mewar, died without issue. On his death-bed he recommended to *his wife* and chiefs, Nahar Sing for their adoption[64]."

Properly to understand the character and manners of a nation, it is not enough to examine the spirit of their laws or the maxims of their moralists. We must discover their practices. In these we do not usually find among the Hindoos any traces of that profound contempt of women, or indelicacy, or want of affection with which they have been charged. Those who are at all versed in the history of India, must have met with innumerable examples of feelings and conduct entirely the reverse of all these. A memorable instance of the truly chivalrous devotion of the Rajpoot to the object of his attachment is recorded as having occurred during the first siege of Cheetore, in the thirteenth century. "Bheemsi was the uncle of the young prince, and protector during his minority. He had espoused the daughter of Hamir Sank (Chohan) of Ceylon, the cause of woes unnumbered to the Sesodias. Her name was Pudmani, a title bestowed only on the superlatively fair, and transmitted with renown to posterity by tradition and the song of the bard. Her beauty, accomplishments, exaltation, and destruction, with other incidental circumstances, constitute the subject of one of the most popular traditions of Rajwarra. The Hindoo bard recognizes the fair in preference to fame and love of conquest, as the motive for the attack of Ala-ud-din, who limited his demand to the possession of Pudmani, though this was after a long and fruitless siege. At length he restricted his desire to a mere sight of this extraordinary beauty, and acceded to the proposal of beholding her through the medium

[64] Annals of Rajast'han, p. 190, 191.

of mirrors. Relying on the faith of the Rajpoot, he entered Cheetore slightly guarded, and having gratified his wish, returned. The Rajpoot, unwilling to be outdone in confidence, accompanied the king to the foot of the fortress, amidst many complimentary excuses from his guest at the trouble he had thus occasioned. It was for this that Ala-ud-din risked his own safety, relying on the superior faith of the Hindoo. Here he had an ambush; Bheemsi was made prisoner, hurried away to the Tatar camp, and his liberty made dependent on the surrender of Pudmani. Despair reigned in Cheetore when this fatal event was known, and it was debated whether Pudmani should be resigned as a ransom for their defender. Of this she was informed, and expressed her acquiescence. Having provided wherewithal to secure her from dishonour, she communed with two chiefs of her own kin and clan of Ceylon, her uncle Gorah and his nephew Badul, who devised a scheme for the liberation of their prince, without hazarding her life or fame. Intimation was despatched to Ala-ud-din, that on the day he withdrew from his trenches, the fair Pudmani would be sent, but in a manner befitting her own and his high station, surrounded by her females and handmaids; not only those who would accompany her to Delhi, but many others who desired to pay her this last mark of reverence. Strict commands were to be issued to prevent curiosity from violating the sanctity of female decorum and privacy. No less than seven hundred covered litters proceeded to the royal camp; in each was placed one of the bravest defenders of Cheetore, borne by six armed soldiers disguised as litter-porters. They reached the camp. The royal tents were inclosed with kanats (walls of cloth); the litters were deposited, and half an hour was granted for a parting interview between the Hindoo prince and his bride.

They then placed their prince in a litter and returned with him, while the greater number (the supposed damsels) remained to accompany the fair to Delhi. But Ala-ud-din had no intention to permit Bheemsi's return, and was becoming jealous of the long interview he enjoyed, when, instead of the prince and Pudmani, the devoted band issued from their litters; but Ala-ud-din was too well guarded. Pursuit was ordered, while these covered the retreat till they perished to a man. A fleet horse was reserved for Bheemsi, on which he was placed, and in safety ascended the fort, at whose outer gate the host of Ala-ud-din was encountered. The choicest of the heroes of Cheetore met the assault. With Gorah and Badul at their head, animated by the noblest sentiments, the deliverance of their chief and the honour of their queen, they devoted themselves to destruction, and few were the survivors of this slaughter of the flower of Mewar. For a time Ala-ud-din was defeated in his object, and the havoc they had made in his ranks, joined to the dread of their determined resistance, obliged him to desist from the enterprise[65]."

Devotion of this kind savours but little of contempt. There is, moreover, a custom prevalent in Rajast'han called the "Festival of the Bracelet," which resembles in spirit some of the nobler usages of European chivalry. "The Festival of the Bracelet is in spring, and whatever its origin, it is one of the few when an intercourse of gallantry of the most delicate nature is established between the fair sex and the cavaliers of Rajast'han. Though the bracelet may be sent by maidens, it is only on occasions of urgent necessity or danger. The Rajpoot dame bestows with the *rakhi* (bracelet) the title of adopted brother; and while its acceptance secures to

[65] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 262—264.

her all the protection of a *cavalier servente*, scandal itself never suggests any other tie to his devotion. He may hazard his life in her cause, and yet never receive a smile in reward, for he cannot even see the fair object who, as brother of her adoption, has constituted him her defender. But there is a charm in the mystery of such connexion, never endangered by close observation, and the loyal to the fair may well attach a value to the public recognition of being the *rakhi-bund bhâe*, the 'bracelet-bound brother,' of a princess. The intrinsic value of such a pledge is never looked to, nor is it requisite it should be costly, though it varies with the means and rank of the donor, and may be of flock silk and spangles, or gold chains and gems. The acceptance of the pledge and its return is by the *katchli*, or corset, of simple silk or satin, or gold brocade and pearls. In shape or application there is nothing similar in Europe; and, as defending the most delicate part of the structure of the fair, it is peculiarly appropriate as an emblem of devotion. A whole province has often accompanied the *katchli*, and the monarch of India was so pleased with this courteous delicacy in the customs of Rajast'han, on receiving the bracelet of the princess Kurnavati, which invested him with the title of her brother, and uncle and protector to her infant Oody Sing, that he pledged himself to her service, 'even if the demand were the castle of Rint'humbor.' Humaioon proved himself a true knight, and even abandoned his conquests in Bengal when called on to redeem his pledge, and succour Cheetore and the widows and minor sons of Sanga Rana [66]."

Anecdotes without number might be cited in proof of the proud position which woman maintains among the warlike tribes of Northern India. Nothing can

[66] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 312, 313.

be farther from slavery than their condition, nothing more inconsistent than their conduct with the character of slaves. When Aurungzebe, in the insolence of power, and presuming on the fallen estate of the Rajpoot sovereign, demanded the hand of a princess of Marwar, and supposing a refusal impossible, sent a *cortége* of two thousand horse to conduct the fair to his court, "the haughty Rajpootni, either indignant at such precipitation, or charmed with the gallantry of the Rana, who had evinced his devotion to the fair by measuring his sword with the head of her house, rejected with disdain the proferred alliance, and justified by brilliant precedents in the romantic history of her nation, she intrusted her cause to the arm of the chief of the Rajpoot race, offering herself as the reward of protection. The family priest (her preceptor) deemed his office honoured by being the messenger of her wishes, and the billet he conveyed is incorporated in the memorial of this reign. 'Is the swan to be the mate of the stork; a Rajpootni, pure in blood, to be wife to the monkey-faced barbarian!' concluding with a threat of self-destruction, if not saved from dishonour. This appeal, with other powerful motives, was seized on with avidity by the Rana as a pretext to throw away the scabbard, in order to illustrate the opening of a warfare, in which he determined to put all to hazard, in defence of his country and his faith[67]."

Another anecdote, which, tragical as it is, shows the importance attached to the preservation of female honour by the Rajpoots, is at the same time illustrative of the degraded condition into which their princes have fallen in these "degenerate days." A few ages ago the actors in the following transaction would rather have shed their heart's blood in the field, than have encountered the infamy of the deed. "Kishna

[67] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 378.

Komari Bae, 'the virgin princess Kishna,' was in her sixteenth year; her mother was of the Chawura race, the ancient kings of Anhulwara. Sprung from the noblest blood of Hind, she added beauty of face and person to an engaging demeanour, and was justly proclaimed the flower of Rajast'han. The rapacious and bloodthirsty Pat'han, Nawab Ameer Khan, covered with infamy, repaired to Oodipoor, where he was joined by the pliant and subtle Ajit. He was meek in his demeanour, unostentatious in his habits; despising honours, yet covetous of power: religion, which he followed with the zeal of an ascetic, if it did not serve as a cloak, was at least no hindrance to an unmeasurable ambition, in the attainment of which he would have sacrificed all but himself. When the Pat'han revealed his design, that either the princess should wed Raja Maun, or by her death seal the peace of Rajwarra, whatever arguments were used to point the alternative, the Rana was made to see no choice between consigning his beloved child to the Rahtore prince, or witnessing the effects of a more extended dishonour from the vengeance of the Pat'han, and the storm of his palace by his licentious adherents:—the fiat passed that Kishna Komari should die.

" But the deed was left for woman to accomplish —the hand of man refused it. The harem of an eastern prince is a world within itself; it is the labyrinth containing the strings that move the puppets which alarm mankind. Here intrigue sits enthroned, and hence its influence radiates to the world, always at a loss to trace effects to their causes. Maharaja Dowlut Sing, descended four generations ago from one common ancestor with the Rana, was first sounded to save the honour of Oodipoor; but horror-struck, he exclaimed, 'Accursed the tongue that commands it! Dust on my allegiance, if thus

to be preserved!' The Maharaja Jowandas, a natural brother, was then called upon; the dire necessity was explained, and it was urged that no common hand could be armed for the purpose. He accepted the poniard, but when in youthful loveliness Kishna appeared before him, the dagger fell from his hand, and he returned more wretched than the victim. The fatal purpose thus revealed, the shrieks of the frantic mother reverberated through the palace, as she implored mercy or execrated the murderers of her child, who alone was resigned to her fate. But death was arrested, not averted. To use the phrase of the narrator, 'she was excused the steel, the cup was prepared,' and prepared by female hands! As the messenger presented it in the name of her father, she bowed and drank it, sending up a prayer for his life and prosperity. The raving mother poured imprecations on his head, while the lovely victim, who shed not a tear, thus endeavoured to console her:—'Why afflict yourself, my mother, at this shortening of the sorrows of life; I fear not to die! Am I not your daughter? Why should I fear death? We are marked out for sacrifice from our birth; we scarcely enter the world but to be sent out again; let me thank my father that I have lived so long.' Thus she conversed till the nauseating draught refused to assimilate with her blood. Again the bitter potion was prepared. She drained it off, and again it was rejected; but, as if to try the extreme of human fortitude, a third was administered, and for a third time nature refused to aid the horrid purpose. It seemed as if the fabled charm, which guarded the life of the founder of her race, was inherited by the virgin Kishna. But the bloodhounds, the Pat'han and Ajit, were impatient till their victim was at rest; and cruelty, as if gathering strength from defeat, made another and a fatal attempt. A powerful opiate

was presented—the *kasoomba* draught. She received it with a smile, wished the scene over, and drank it. The desires of barbarity were accomplished. 'She slept!' a sleep from which she never awoke[68]."

It is admitted that the higher classes of females in Hindoostan lead in general a far more secluded life than women of a corresponding rank in Europe. And this, though the Hindoo ladies themselves do not appear to regard it in that light, may justly be considered as an injury to society. But this retirement by no means impairs their influence over those whom alone a virtuous woman can desire to influence. Like the magnetic power, their attraction, however latent, "is not," says Colonel Tod, "the less certain. To win their unseen smiles the Hindoo warrior toils and bleeds; for there is no recess of the harem into which the renown of a manly character and gallant actions will not penetrate. The bards, who resemble the troubadours of the middle ages and the Aoidoi of ancient Greece, are everywhere admitted, to the palace as well as to the cottage; and the youth of their country, decorated in their glowing songs with all the ornaments of poetry, are presented to the ardent imaginations of the fair in a light highly calculated to inspire admiration and love."

Instead of treating woman contemptuously, the Rajpoot consults her on every occasion, draws from her ordinary actions the omen of success, and appends to her name the epithet of *Devi*, or "goddess." "The superficial observer," remarks Colonel Tod, "who applies his own standard to the customs of all nations, laments with an affected philanthropy the degraded condition of the Hindoo female, in which sentiment he would find her little disposed to join. He particularly laments her want of liberty, and calls her seclusion imprisonment." "But," adds he, "from

[68] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 463—466.

the knowledge I possess of the *freedom*, the *respect*, the *happiness*, which Rajpoot women enjoy, I am by no means inclined to deplore their state as one of captivity[69]." However, neither does he advocate this part of Rajpoot discipline, which he regards as entirely unnecessary, and, as far as it operates, injurious, like all other restraints, to public and private virtue.

The Rajpoot ladies, though respected and happy, are not exempted, when married, from all care of their household affairs; nor are they supposed to be degraded by putting their fair hands to works of utility. Like the princesses of the heroic and patriarchal ages, they are really useful members of the families to which they belong; and if they do not weave, like Penelope, or, like Nausicaa, follow their handmaids to the field with the linen, they still find occasions of employing themselves. Occasionally, however, when united with persons somewhat their inferiors in rank, they have evinced a disposition to render their high birth an excuse for refusing to comply with the customs of the country. This was experienced by the chief of Sadri, a celebrated soldier of Rajast'han, who had obtained the hand of a princess of Mewar. "To the courteous request, 'Ranawut-jî, fill me a cup of water,' he received a contemptuous refusal, with a remark that 'the daughter of a hundred kings would not become cup-bearer to the chieftain of Sadri.' 'Very well,' replied the plain soldier, 'you may return to your father's house, if you can be of no use in mine.' A messenger was instantly sent to the court, and the message, with every aggravation, was made known; and she followed on the heels of her messenger. A summons soon arrived for the Sadri chief to attend his sovereign at the capital. He obeyed; and arrived in time to give his explanation

[69] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 609, 610.

just as the Rana was proceeding to hold a full court. As usual, the Sadri chief was placed on his sovereign's right hand, and when the court broke up, the heir apparent of Mewar, at a preconcerted sign, stood at the edge of the carpet, performing the menial office of holding the slippers of the chief. Shocked at such a mark of extreme respect, he stammered forth some words of homage, his unworthiness, &c.; to which the Rana replied, 'As my son-in-law, no distinction too great can be conferred: take home your wife, she will never again refuse you a cup of water'[70]."

In all countries, to be tolerated, dramatic pieces must present to the audience pictures of life and manners, resembling the originals of which they profess to be copies. The plays of the Hindoos may therefore be taken as correct delineations of their manners and customs; and these, as far as they are known, entirely support the view which I have taken of Indian society. According to the learned and elegant translator of the Hindoo Theatre[71], the characters, both of heroes and heroines, are painted with the most minute exactness and attention to probability. Here, therefore, we may discover how far the ladies of Hindoostan mingled in general society previous to the Musulman invasion. Independently of the mythological personages, which make a prominent figure in several of the pieces, we find introduced the wives of holy men, princesses, courtezans, and the various inhabitants of the harem. In those light pieces which represent the manners of common life, no virgin of high birth appears upon the stage; which is the case also in the plays of Plautus and Terence.

[70] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 612.

[71] H. H. Wilson, in his Dissertation on the Dramatic System of the Hindoos, prefixed to his translation of the Sanscrit Theatre.

But in more serious and lofty compositions, as the 'Malati and Mâdhava,' and the 'Ratnâvali,' young ladies of birth and character adorn the scene. It would appear, from these and various other examples, that the princes of India borrowed from the Mohammedans the practice of secluding their women in the harems. Previously, though subject to many restraints, they were perfectly at liberty to appear in public; enjoyed, in company with the men, the amusements of the theatre; formed the principal part in all marriage processions; visited the temples of the gods; and bathed, with little secrecy or precaution, in the sacred rivers. The last two privileges they still enjoy. Neither were they, even in more modern times, rigidly excluded from the presence of all other men than their husbands or sons. But in those ancient times, which may be called the heroic ages of Hindoostan, even queens and princesses seem to have enjoyed the liberty of travelling whithersoever they pleased. Even unmarried women were not excluded from the company of men. They might even listen to their conversation, but it would have been thought indecorous to have replied, or, if they did, it was necessary to do so in a low voice. Married women were under no such restraint. They might appear in public, as we find in Sacontala; and are sometimes introduced conversing jocularly with their husbands' friends, and exercising, in an unmerciful manner, their talents for caustic raillery[72].

In a country where women were commonly regarded with contempt, a poet would not endeavour to excite public sympathy, touch the feelings, and command the applause of an audience by representing them as tender, affectionate, faithful, exposing themselves to imminent danger for the object of their love, or fol-

[72] Wilson, Dissertation, &c. sec. 5.

lowing him with heroic devotion even in his capricious retirement from the world. In a passage from an ancient Sanscrit poem we find a lady thus seeking and lamenting her husband: "Then the princess wandered in the forest, an abode of serpents crowded with trees which resound with the sweet buzz of bees, the resort of flocks of birds. With her dark hair dishevelled through her haste, Bhaimi thus lamented: King, thou slayest foes, but defendest thy kindred with thy quiver and thy sword. Unrivalled in excellence, and conversant with morality, how hast thou practised the desertion of a wife, proud, but left helpless in a forest; thus rendering thyself the limit of praise? But I consider this evil to be the act of another, and do not charge thee with it: I do not blame thee, my husband, as in fault for this terror[73]."

From a remarkably beautiful passage in a piece of Bharavi, we discover that in his time women were by no means excluded from society, that they were personally addressed by their lovers, and were supposed to be possessed of sufficient firmness to withstand all the arts of seduction. "This mountain," says the poet, "with its lakes overspread by the bloom of the lotos, and overshadowed by arbours of creeping plants whose foliage and blossoms are enchanting, the pleasing scenery subdues the hearts of women who maintained their steadiness of mind even in the company of a lover[74]."

In speaking of the seclusion of Hindoo women, we must be understood to mean the higher classes only; and even of these, only such as dwell in those parts of the country where the example of the Mohammedans, or the fear of their lawless passions, prevailed; for in general the women of India enjoy complete liberty. Among the middle and lower ranks,

[73] Asiatic Researches, vol. x. p. 404. [74] Ibid. p. 410.

indeed, whose wives and daughters are required to aid in the management of domestic concerns, in business, and even in the labours of agriculture, seclusion would be impracticable. But, were it otherwise, the practice seems to be wholly inconsistent with the simplicity of their manners. Throughout the Dekkan, where the manners of the Hindoos have been least modified by foreign influence, the women are upon much the same footing, with respect to liberty, as they are in Europe. Among the castes who sell milk, they aid in attending on the female buffaloes, prepare the milk, and carry it to market. To prevent, however, the necessity of their mingling too freely with the soldiery, the men themselves carry the milk to the camps, while their wives milk the buffaloes, and conduct them to pasture. In other parts of the country, women labour in the fields, as they do in France and England, in transplanting rice, &c., and are the only domestic servants employed by farmers. Among this class of persons, the women of the family themselves cook, fetch water from the wells, and perform the other household labours. Near Seringapatam, the women of a low caste, called *Uparu*[75], employ themselves in the fields among the men, in collecting the limestone nodules for burning. Their wages are one-third of that of the men. Wood being in this part of the country extremely scarce, the fuel most commonly used is cow-dung, which is formed into small cakes by women, frequently of high caste, who attend upon the herds when at pasture, and gather up the dung with their hands. These cakes are brought into Seringapatam every morning, in baskets, by women, in many instances well dressed, and possessing the most graceful and elegant forms. In fact, the Carnata women, though dirty in their habits, are gene-

[75] See Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 303.

rally well proportioned, possessing, above all things, finely shaped arms and bosoms. Their dress also is elegant and becoming. Among the ornaments of these women, glass rings for the arms are conspicuous. These rings are generally so small, that, in getting them over the hand, the skin is frequently rubbed off, and blood drawn; but since their smallness is regarded as a mark of delicacy and beauty, women heroically despise the pain inflicted by putting them on.

Among the *Pancham Banijigaru*[76], who are worshippers of Siva, and, like all other tribes of that sect, bury their dead, men do not purchase their wives, though they may marry as many as they please. The women, however, though not kept in seclusion, are not permitted to marry a second time; or, if their parents neglect to provide them with husbands before the age of puberty, to marry at all. Female chastity is held in high esteem among this tribe; and, notwithstanding the licentiousness of the men, their women are rarely guilty of adultery. The females of the *Teliga*, or *Telinga Banijigaru*[77], were formerly accustomed to burn themselves with the bodies of their deceased husbands, but the practice has now fallen into disuse. They are an industrious race of women, and are so valuable to their husbands, whom they for the most part support, that they are very rarely divorced, except for adultery. And even when guilty of this crime, unless it has been with a man of very low caste, their husbands are generally propitiated by the intercession of the *swamalu*, or priest, who, causing them to eat together some consecrated food, and sprinkling them with a little holy water, puts an end to their differences.

76 Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 236.
77 Ibid. vol. i. p. 240, &c.

The *Canara Devangas*[78], who allow themselves a plurality of wives, purchase the girls from their fathers, but do not keep them in seclusion, or practise divorce, except for adultery. Among the *Teliga Devangas*[79] widows formerly buried themselves alive with their husbands; but the custom has long gone out of fashion. The girls of this tribe are marriageable after the age of puberty. It is remarkable that among the *Comaras*, a mixed, or impure caste, inhabiting a district in the neighbourhood of Bangalore, the Rajpoot prejudice, which regards as incestuous the marriage of two individuals of the same family, should be found to prevail[80]. An analogous notion is entertained by the Brahmins. Polygamy, and the purchase of wives, are practised by this tribe. When a match has been agreed upon, the husband obtains his wife upon credit, and the purchase money is usually paid by instalments, from the earnings of the girl herself. The marriage is celebrated by a feast, given by the husband to the whole caste, and consisting of four sheep, and a certain quantity of country rum. When a woman of this tribe is guilty of adultery, she generally escapes with a good beating, but may be divorced; in which case, however, she can marry again.

The *Comatigas*, a tribe said to be of the Vaisya caste, do not keep their women in seclusion in the south of India; but in the north, where the fair sex are more generally confined, they also follow the example of their neighbours. Widows sometimes consume themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands. Girls are not marriageable after the age of puberty, and cannot enter into second marriage.

[78] Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 244, 420.

[79] Ibid. vol. i. p. 353.

[80] A similar law prevails in China. Abel Rémusat, Coup-d'oeil sur la Chine.

Among the Brahmins of Southern India the women appear in public, as in Europe. They cannot, however, contract second marriages, though they no longer burn themselves as formerly with the dead bodies of their husbands. Unless married before the age of puberty, they are regarded as impure. When a woman is divorced, which she can be for no other cause than adultery, her husband performs the same ceremonies for her as if she were dead. To prevent dissension in families, the wife is compelled to profess the religion of her husband [81]. Among several tribes women are much more numerous than men, for though many individuals have as many as eight wives, no man is without a wife. The women of the *Morasu* tribe, when they reach the age of fifteen or twenty, and have borne several children, go to the temple of Kâla Bhairava, and, as we have already related in the chapter on religion, cut off one or two of the fingers of their right hand, to appease the wrath of this destructive deity, who might otherwise, they imagine, deprive them of their children. The females of the *Satânana* tribe, who, in old times, followed their husbands to the funeral pile, but have long neglected this practice, perform no act of productive industry, though they cook the family provisions, and draw water from the wells. Among the *Wully-Tigulas*, and, generally, wherever the women are industrious and useful, adultery is regarded as a venial offence, which is sufficiently punished by a beating [82]. Widows of the *Bheri Lingait* tribe can, on no account, marry again, the action being consi-

[81] Dr. Buchanan, 'Journey through the Mysore,' &c. vol. i. p. 309, 353, considers this to be a proof of the degradation of women in India; as if, says he, they were not worthy to form an opinion of their own. The law seems designed to cut off one fertile source of domestic misery.

[82] Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 323, &c. 339, &c.

dered unspeakably infamous. The *Curubaru* women, who are exceedingly industrious, performing every species of rustic labour, except digging and ploughing, continue marriageable after the age of puberty, and can be divorced only for adultery. Concubinage is scarcely regarded as dishonourable[83].

In the fortified villages of the Mysore country, the women, commonly regarded as weak and pusillanimous creatures, crowd upon the rude ramparts by the side of their husbands, and roll down or cast upon the enemy the stones which serve them for artillery. The practice of widows burning themselves with their deceased husbands, though held in high honour, is exceedingly rare in Central and Southern India, as may be inferred from the fact that when a lady of a Poligar family performed this heroic but absurd action, it was thought to be a deed worthy of immortality, and the fortress over which her descendants reigned was called *Modighesky*, after her name. Still further to honour her memory, the sovereignty was transferred from the male to the female line, and was possessed in succession by a series of princesses until the downfal or extinction of the family.

Among the *Cubbaru*[84], a tribe inhabiting the country above the Ghauts, and following the business of lime-burning, when a woman commits adultery, both the husband and the adulterer are fined; the latter as a seducer, the former for having been negligent. After this, a portion of the tribe assembles, and the woman is publicly asked whether she chooses to return to her husband. When the parties cannot agree, the marriage is dissolved; but if they agree, as they generally do, to live together again, the husband gives the assembly a dinner, and the affair is for-

[83] Buchanan's Mysore, vol. i. p. 259, &c., vol. ii. p. 25, &c.

[84] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 24.

gotten or overlooked. It is supposed that the industry of these women purchases for them the privilege of being wanton. The *Curubaru* buy their wives; and a girl of good family will cost at least one pound sterling. Among the *Panchama Cumbharu* adultresses are excommunicated. The same custom prevails among the *Nona Wocul.* The *Malaya Curubaru* women are not considered marriageable until after the age of puberty, a custom which is execrated as a mark of the grossest depravity by the higher orders.

The *Coiculars* marry a plurality of wives, and their women continue marriageable after the age of puberty. Among the *Siritali*, a subdivision of this tribe, widows are permitted to marry again. Adultery with a stranger is punished by excommunication, but if the seducer belongs to the same caste, it is regarded merely as a family affair, the husband and the offender are fined about a shilling each, and no more is said. The Brahmini women of this part of India are exceedingly beautiful, but ill educated and insipid in character; which renders their society less courted than that of the *Cuncheny*, or dancing-girls. Among the *Palli*, a very numerous caste, employed in husbandry, or in irrigating the fields and gardens, girls continue to be marriageable after the age of puberty; but decrease in value as they grow older. At first a wife is rather costly, the price of a young girl, under the age of puberty, being from nine to eleven *pagodas;* which may be supposed in many cases to counteract the permission to marry several wives, granted by the law. Widows marry again without disgrace. In cases of adultery the husband may flog his wife, or divorce her, though the former is generally preferred. However, should he turn away the wife, the seducer receives her, pays a small fine, and no disgrace ensues to any of the parties.

In the country above the Ghauts, the women curiously flock round a stranger, without at all endeavouring to conceal themselves, by peeping from behind walls or hedges, as they do in the northern parts of Coimbatore, and in Bengal. Among the *Cadar*, a rude tribe inhabiting the frontiers of Malayala, who subsist by collecting drugs, the women gather such wild roots as are edible. They possess no means of killing game, and neither cultivate the earth, nor rear any domestic animals; but eat whatever they find dead. Polygamy is allowed, and widows can marry again. In northern Malabar the Brahmini girls are remarkable for their beauty, cleanliness, and the elegance of their dress. The customs of the *Vaytuvans*, an impure tribe of Malayala extraction, allow a man who detects his wife in adultery, to put her to death; but the offence is no longer deemed of a serious nature, and the punishment is commuted into a beating. Among the *Poliar*, a servile tribe of Malayala, a wife may be purchased for three shillings. The marriage ceremony consists in putting a ring on the bride's finger. When the husband desires to part with his wife, he may sell her to any person who will refund the marriage expenses; and she, on her part, may quit him whenever she pleases. Exactly the same customs prevail among the *Catalun*.

In the northern parts of Malabar, the *Nairs*, who are at enmity with the Europeans, have persuaded their women that white men are a species of hobgoblins. For this reason, whenever an European appears in a village, the women squat down behind their mud-walls to peep at him, and if they imagine themselves discovered, run away in great terror. Not that they are by any means confined by the rules of caste, for they are perfectly at liberty, but that they apprehend some personal injury. Among the *Cunian*, or astrologers of Malabar, wives are

cheap, the price being little more than six shillings. When separations take place, which perhaps they seldom do, the boys follow the father, the girls the mother, and each party immediately contracts a new connexion. The *Biluaras*, a caste who subsist by extracting the juice of the palm-tree, marry a plurality of wives, who all live in their houses. On the death of the husband, the widows retire with their children to the houses of their brothers, and the eldest son of the eldest sister to the deceased becomes master of his house and property. If a man fall into poverty, his children retire to the houses of their uncles, even before their father's death. Girls continue to be marriageable after the age of puberty, and widows, or divorced women, may marry again.

Among the extraordinary customs which prevail in the Tulava district of Canara, that which is practised in the temples is perhaps the most remarkable. It has given rise to a particular caste called *Moylar*. "Any woman of the four pure castes, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, or Sudra, who is tired of her husband, or who being a widow is tired of a life of celibacy, goes to the temple and eats some of the rice offered to the idol. She is then taken before the officers of government, who assemble some people of her caste to inquire into the causes of her resolution; and if she be of the Brahmin caste, to give her an option of living either in the temple or out of its precincts. If she choose the former, she gets a daily allowance of rice, and annually a piece of cloth. She must sweep the temple, fan the idol with a Tibet cow's-tail, and confine her amours to the Brahmins. In fact, she generally becomes a concubine to some officer of the revenue, who gives her a trifle in addition to her public allowance, and who will flog her severely if she grant favours to any other person. The male children of these women are called Moylar,

but are fond of assuming the title of *Stanika*, and wear the Brahminical thread. As many of them as can procure employment live about the temples, sweep the areas, sprinkle them with an infusion of cow-dung, carry flambeaux before the gods, and perform other similar low offices. The others are reduced to betake themselves to agriculture or some honest employment. The daughters are partly brought up to live like their mothers, and the remainder are given in marriage to the Stanikas.

"Such of the Brahmini women as do not choose to live in the temples, as well as those of the inferior castes, may live with any man of pure descent, paying annually a small trifle to the temple. Their children are likewise called Moylar. Those of a Brahmini woman can intermarry with those born in the temples, but they affect to avoid those of an inferior caste. It is remarkable in this caste, where, from the corrupt examples of their mothers, the chastity of the women might be considered as doubtful, that a man's children are his heirs; while in most other castes the custom of Tulava requires a man's sister's children, by way of securing the succession in the family. The Moylar differ much in their customs, each endeavouring to follow those of the caste from which his mother derived her origin. Thus the descendants of a Brahmini prostitute wear the thread, eat no animal food, drink no spirituous liquors, and make marks on their faces and bodies similar to those which are used by the sacred caste. They are not however permitted to read the Vedas, or the eighteen Puranas. Indeed, but very few of them learn to keep accounts, or to read songs written in the vulgar language. Contrary to the customs of the Brahmins a widow is permitted to marry[85]."

From various circumstances it may be inferred,

[85] Buchanan's Mysore, vol. iii. p. 65, 66.

that in Western India marriage is a state of happiness. "One delicate attention which most of the Hindoo women voluntarily pay their husbands, is, that when he is absent from home for any length of time, they seldom wear their jewels, or decorate themselves with ornaments; since the object they most wished to please is no longer in their presence[86]." Those among the Hindoos who live beyond the corrupting influence of great cities, are said still to preserve much of that simplicity of manners attributed by the poets to the Golden Age; "and seem, more than any other people now existing, to realize the innocent and peaceful mode of life, which they ascribe to that happy era. When I saw the Brahmin women of distinction drawing water at the village wells, and tending their cattle to the lakes and rivers, they recalled the transactions of the patriarchal days. Very often have I witnessed a scene similar to that between Abraham's servant and Rebecca, at the entrance of a Hindoo village in Guzerat[87]." "The Hindoo damsels of the present day live in as much simplicity as those formerly in Mesopotamia; they still descend to the wells, and continue to pour the water into an adjacent trough for the convenience of the cattle." "The Asiatics love to retire, with their women and children, to some cool spot near a river or tank, shaded by the friendly banian tree, or spreading mango; there they enjoy that sort of indolent repose which they are so fond of; and partake of an innocent repast of herbs and fruits, on the verdant carpet[88]."

The manner in which a Hindoo woman spends her time, in industrious families, is nearly as follows. Rising early in the morning she lights the lamp, and spins a certain quantity of cotton for the garments

[86] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 76.
[87] Ibid. vol. i. p. 79. [88] Ibid. vol. i. p. 80.

of the family; she next feeds and attends to the children; and, when this is done, she mingles a little cow-dung with water, with which she sprinkles and purifies the floor. She then sweeps the house and the yard. This being done she breakfasts, after which she cleans the brass and stone vessels with straw, ashes, and water. Her next employment is to cleanse, bruise, and boil rice. After which, about ten or eleven o'clock, she takes a napkin, and accompanies the neighbouring women to the tank or river to bathe. Here many women make a clay image of the Lingam, which they worship with the customary rites, the performance of which occupies nearly an hour. Others content themselves with repeating a few prayers, bowing to the water, the sun, &c., which may all be completed in fifteen minutes. While bathing, they usually rub their gold or silver ornaments with sand, anoint their bodies with oil, and cleanse their hair with the mud of the sacred stream. On her way home, or on her return, the female stands in the sun to dry her hair, changes her garments, washes her feet, and then attends to her cooking. Before she commences, however, she never fails to eat a mouthful, a custom, the neglect of which, it is feared, might bring down misfortunes on the family. She first prepares the roots, greens, and fruits; then bruises the spices, &c. by placing them on a flat stone, and rolling them with another; after which she cooks the fish or vegetables, concluding with boiling the rice. The Hindoo fire-places, which stand in the yard or kitchen, are formed of clay; and they have likewise moveable fire-places made of the same material, which are not unlike those moveable furnaces which may be seen exposed for sale in many parts of Paris and other French cities[89].

[89] Ward, View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 197, 198.

From the above sketch of the manners and condition of the Hindoo women, in which we have described the principal advantages and disadvantages of their situation, it will not, we think, be inferred that they are treated with any peculiar harshness. It appears, among other things, that, though confined more or less rigidly in Bengal, and many parts of Northern India, at least among the higher classes, they elsewhere enjoy much the same degree of liberty as in Europe. Neither does their time anywhere hang heavily on their hands. A part of the day is spent in visiting the temples, joining in religious ceremonies and processions, in bathing with their female friends at the rivers, and in performing their part at weddings and other festivities. In many instances they are taught to read and write, and, in Rajast'han, devote a portion of their time to the perusal of amusing books with the family priest, or in listening to the songs of the bards. Besides, they frequently accompany their husbands on journeys, and enjoy the pleasure of contemplating the varied face of nature in those magnificent countries; and some even engage in pilgrimages to the various holy places of India.

We now proceed to describe some other remarkable features of Hindoo society. In their forms of address and behaviour in company, the Hindoos have been ranked, by one no way inclined to flatter them, among the politest of nations. But it must be acknowledged that their politeness very frequently degenerates into gross adulation and panegyric, which is sometimes the case among other nations more renowned for the refinement of their manners. When the Hindoo enters the presence of his spiritual guide, he immediately prostrates himself, and touching the feet of the holy man, exclaims, "You are my saviour." To a benefactor he says, "You are my

father and mother:" to a man whom he wishes to praise, "You are religion incarnate;" or "O sir, your fame is gone all over the country; yea, from country to country." "As a benefactor you are equal to Karna." "You are equal to Yudhisht'hira in your regard for truth." "You have overcome all your passions." "You are a sea of excellent qualities." "You are the father and mother of Brahmins, cows, and women[90]."

Bernier, who was an acute observer of mankind, and had made the manners of the Hindoos his peculiar study, particularly notices their remarkable proneness to flattery, and tells an amusing anecdote in illustration of it. Being during his long residence at Delhi in high and constant favour with Danekmend Khan, one of the most influential noblemen in the Mogul court, he enjoyed numerous opportunities of obliging the natives. "These kind offices were uniformly repaid with abundant flattery, if not with gratitude; and the skilful practitioners invariably discharged a portion of the debt before-hand. Putting on a grave face—a possession of infinite value in the East—every person who had need of his services assured him at the outset, that he was the Aristotalis, the Bocrate, and the Ebn Sina Ulzaman (that is, the Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Avicenna of the age). It was in vain that he disavowed all claim to such immoderate honours; they persisted in their assertions; argued down his modesty; and, eternally renewing the charge, in the end compelled him to acquiesce, and consent to allow all the glorious attributes of those illustrious men to be centred in his single person. A Brahmin whom he recommended to the Khan outdid them all; for upon his first introduction, after having compared the Emir to the greatest kings and conquerors that

[90] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 188.

ever reigned, he concluded by gravely observing—'My lord, whenever you put your foot in the stirrup, and ride abroad accompanied by your cavalry, the earth trembles beneath your feet, the eight elephants which support it not being able to endure so great an exertion!' Upon this, Bernier, who could no longer restrain his inclination to laugh, remarked to the Khan, that, since this was the case, it was advisable he should ride as seldom as possible on horseback, in order to prevent those earthquakes, which might, perhaps, occasion much mischief. 'You are perfectly right,' replied Danekmend, with a smile, 'and it is for that very reason that I generally go abroad in a palankeen'[91]."

There are among the Hindoos five kinds of obeisance, of which the *first* is that called *ashtânga,* in which the person who prostrates himself, causes eight parts of his body—his knees, hands, temples, nose, and chin—to touch the ground: second, *panchânga,* which requires the touching of the ground with the forehead, temples, and hands: third, *dandavata,* in which the person merely bows his forehead to the ground: fourth, *namaskâra,* or the touching of the forehead with the open hands joined, and with the two thumbs several times: fifth, *abhivadana,* in which the person gently bends forward the head, and raises the right hand towards the forehead, which is the ordinary mode of salutation. A Sudra coming into the presence of a king and a Brahmin, though the latter should be in the service of the former, would salute the monarch with the common salâm, reserving the reverential namaskara for the priest. When women of equal rank meet in Bengal, they salute each other by raising their joined hands to the head; if of different classes, the inferior bows, and rubs the dust of her feet upon her forehead, but

[91] Lives of Celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 214, 215.

without receiving any mark of recognition from the superior.

The Hindoos indulge in conversation in the most extravagant hyberbole. In describing a splendid palace, they call it the "Heaven of Vishnu;" a heavy rain, "the deluge;" a crowd, "assembled myriads." Should they have occasion to mention a waterspout, they say, "the elephants of the god Indra are drinking;" the rainbow is "Râma's bow;" a whirlwind is "the sporting of infernal spirits;" thunder is "the sound of Indra's thunderbolts, hurled at the gigantic demons who come to drink water from the clouds;" and lightning is "the flashing of these thunderbolts as they are darted through the air." The circle which appears on slightly hazy nights around the moon, is caused by the splendour of the gods who are sitting in council with the deity of that planet.

The style which they adopt in their letters, and in the compliments prefixed to them, is singularly extravagant. In addressing *a king*, they say: "To the great, the excellent, the prosperous, the illustrious king, Krishna-Chandra Raya, the nourisher of multitudes from many countries, the fragrance of whose fame has spread through the world; at whose feet many kings, adorned with refulgent crowns, bow; whose glory makes his enemies shrink as the sun does the moonlight; whose fame is pure as the queen of night, the priest of the perpetual sacrificial fire." *To a teacher:* "To Abhishtadeva, the ferryman across the sea of this world, the teacher of the way of deliverance from sin, the sun-like remover of the great darkness springing from worldly attachment; the nut which removes the impurity of the soul; to thy feet I bow, the nails of which are like the horns of the half moon." *To a father:* "To the excellent person my father, the only author of my

existence, my governor, whose mind drinks the honey on the water-lily feet of the deity; at thy feet which drive away my darkness I supplicate." *To a mother:* "To my excellent and dignified mother, who bore me in her womb; who feeding, nourishing, and comforting me, raised me to manhood; by whom I saw the world, and who gave me a body to perform the offices of religion; at thy feet I supplicate, which are the water-lilies on the reservoir of my heart[92]."

When after a short absence two Hindoos, who are familiarly known to each other, meet, the inferior, if they happen to be of different ranks, endeavours to take hold of the feet of the other; this the superior prevents; when, the claims of dignity being satisfied, they embrace each other, move their heads twice from one shoulder to the other, and then make mutual inquiries respecting each other's welfare. "Through your favour," the inferior replies, "I continue well;" or, "As you command, all is well." Or he asks in his turn, "How? Is the house well?" meaning the family; for to inquire more particularly would be contrary to etiquette. A Brahmin sitting accidentally near a stranger of the same class, whom he imagines his inferior, inquires, "Of what caste are you?" "I am a Brahmin." "To which line of Brahmins do you belong?" "I am (for example) a Rarhi Brahmin." "Of what family?" "Of the family of Vishnu T'hakura." And all this is considered perfectly accordant with the rules of politeness.

In India, as in most other countries, the lower orders are greatly addicted to quarrelling; and, when thus engaged, give vent to their fury in the most vituperative language. Not unfrequently this energetic style of popular eloquence rouses the choler so far that they come to blows. In this case the person struck sometimes appeals to the spectators,

92 Ward, vol. iii. p. 190.

and, taking hold of their feet, says, "You are witnesses that he struck me." Those for whom a court of justice has no charms, anticipate this action by exclaiming, "Ah, do not touch our feet!" On other occasions the injured person takes a corner of the garment of every person present, and tying it in a knot, invokes their testimony. When guilty of common swearing, the Hindoo says, "If I live, let me endure all the sorrow you would endure if I should die!" But, for the sake of despatch, all this is supposed to be expressed by the three words "Eat your head!" Another says, "If I have committed such an action, let me become a leper!" Or, to sum up all human ills in one word, he utters the horrible imprecation of "May I become a Chandala!"

When any person happens to sneeze, all those present say "Live," to which the sneezer replies, "with you." Those who yawn must snap their thumb and finger, repeating at the same time the name of some god, as "Râma! Râma!"

A very extraordinary practice, which might, perhaps, be advantageously imitated in more civilized communities, prevails among the superior classes of Hindoos: they have in their houses an apartment called *krodhagara*, or "the chamber of anger," in which any member of the family, who happens to be out of temper, shuts himself up, until solitude has medicined his rage. When sufficient time for reflection has been allowed, the master of the family goes, and endeavours to bring back the seceder to the domestic circle. If by chance it should be a woman, he inquires what she wants. To this she perhaps replies, that she desires to have a large fish to eat every day—having probably seen one in the hands of some female member of the family—or a palankeen and bearers to carry her daily to the river to bathe; or a large sum of money to perform the wor-

ship of some idol; or rich garments, and costly and beautiful ornaments. Having obtained her wishes, she consents, to borrow a vulgar English adage, "to come out of Coventry."

When a Hindoo has met with misfortunes in a particular house, he accounts for the circumstance by supposing that there must be some bones buried in it, and under this impression he frequently removes to another dwelling. In fact, when bones have been repeatedly found in a house, it is almost always abandoned. Their method of recovering stolen goods is remarkable. Should suspicion alight upon any person in the house, they in some place collect together all the members of the family, and rub their thumb-nails, imagining that the name of the thief will become legible on the nail of the offender.

It is considered unlucky for travellers to leave their home and undertake a journey in certain months. They likewise regard it as ominous of evil, when a person about to commence any undertaking hears the rustling, or the voice, or chirping of a lizard, or if any one sneezes; or if, being about to set out on a journey, he be called back; or strikes his head against anything, or sees an empty *kalasa*, or water-pan. "Ah! say they, I suppose some evil will befall me to-day, for the first person I saw this morning was such or such a miserable wretch!" The following are enumerated among good omens: if a traveller, departing on a journey, sees a dead body, a kalasa full of water, or a jackal on his left; or a cow, a deer, or a Brahmin on his right. The creators of Hindoo superstition have taken care to class themselves among those things, the sight of which, as indicative of good fortune, is always a source of pleasure.

Among the delights of the Hindoo, of every rank and age, is the hooka. This consists of three principal parts; first, "a wooden, brass, or glass bottle

containing water; second, a hollow pipe, inserted in the head of this bottle, and reaching down into the water, on which a cup is placed containing tobacco and fire; third, in the vacuum, at the head of the bottle, is also placed what is termed a snake, or crooked pipe, one end of which descends into the water, and to the other end the mouth is applied, and through it the smoke is drawn, after being cooled in the water." Instead of the brass, or glass bottle, the poorer natives make use of a cocoa-nut, with a small reed for a pipe. Few persons chew tobacco, though many ladies mix a leaf or two with their *pana:* but, among the higher castes, the women eschew both snuff and tobacco. It is not unusual, however, for the learned *pandits*, who might otherwise perhaps dose over their metaphysics, to take snuff, which they carry about in a large snail-shell, used as a snuff-box [93].

A large portion of the Hindoo population is at present divided into two great classes, denominated "the Right Hand," and "the Left Hand." To the Left Hand belong the whole Vaisya tribe, the Panchala, or five castes of artisans, and some other inferior tribes of Sudras, together with the Chakili, or "cobblers," whom the Abbé Dubois denominates "the most infamous of all castes." The Right Hand reckons among its partisans the most distinguished castes of Sudras. To these Dubois adds the Pariahs, who, he says, are "its strongest bulwark;" but then, in the next line, these same Pariahs are enumerated, together with the Brahmins, and several tribes of Sudras, among those who remain neuter. "The Pariahs, therefore, belong, and do not belong, to the division of the Right Hand. Be this as it may, the opposition between these divisions of the people

[93] Ward, View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iii. p. 200.

arises from certain privileges to which they both lay claim; "and when any encroachment is made by either, it is instantly followed by tumults, which frequently spread over whole provinces, accompanied with every excess, and generally with bloody contests. Gentlest of all creatures, timid under all other circumstances, here only the Hindoo seems to change his nature. There is no danger that he fears to encounter in maintaining what he considers his right; and rather than yield it, he is ready to make any sacrifice, and even to hazard his life. I have repeatedly witnessed instances of these popular insurrections excited by the disputes between the two hands, and pushed to such an extreme of fury that the presence of a military force under arms had no effect to quiet them, nor even to allay their clamours, or stop their outrageous course in what they conceive the rightful cause. I have known instances made by the magistrates to soothe these uproars by remonstrances and other means of conciliation, and when these have produced no effect, they have been obliged to resort to measures of compulsion. Some shots of musketry would then be tried, but neither this, nor the certainty of its being followed up with stronger measures, has the slightest effect in abating their insolence. Even when an overwhelming military force has fully put them down, it is only for the moment; and whenever an opportunity occurs, they are instantly up again, without reflecting on the evils they formerly suffered, or showing the smallest tendency to moderate their impetuous violence. Such are the excesses to which the timid, the peaceable Hindoo sometimes abandons himself; while his bloody contests spring out of motives which, to an European at least, would appear frivolous and trifling. Perhaps the sole cause of the contest is his right to wear *pantoufles;* or whether he may parade in a palanquin or on horseback, on the

day of his marriage. Sometimes it is the privilege of being escorted by armed men; sometimes that of having a trumpet sounded before him, or the distinction of being accompanied by the country music at public ceremonies. Perhaps it is the ambition of having flags of certain colours, or with the resemblances of certain deities displayed about his person on such great occasions. These are some of the important privileges amongst many others not less so, in asserting which the Indians do not scruple occasionally to shed each other's blood[94]."

The Hindoos have been sometimes represented as in the highest degree inhospitable and uncharitable; principally by writers who appear to have dreaded falling under the suspicion of being wanting in philosophical acumen. But we cannot see why an uncharitable prejudice should be considered more philosophical than the opposite error. The business seems to be, to discover what is true, not what is favourable or unfavourable. When examined without prejudice, the Hindoos appear in this, as in most other respects, to be deserving alternately of blame and of praise. Unfortunately there is nothing striking in this view of the matter. To produce a powerful effect, it would be necessary to work up the picture with glaring colours; to declaim, to exaggerate; to rouse indignation; or to excite and interest the feelings. But these advantages we must forego. We can neither represent the Hindoos, as some have done, as a gentle, amiable, pastoral, Arcadian people, living on the fruits of the earth, in all the beautiful simplicity of the golden age; nor can we, with others, who affect to entertain superior views, regard this people as a sanguinary, inhospitable, treacherous, unfeeling, yet timid race, destitute alike of charity and common humanity.

94 Dubois, Description, &c. p. 10, 11.

We have already more than once exposed the fallacy of adducing the regulations of a half obsolete code, as a proof that certain customs at present prevail among the people for whom that code was compiled. But when the defects of a people are pretended to be traced to its laws, it may not be irrelevant to show what the regulations of those laws, on the point in question, actually are. Menu recommends hospitality. "To the guest," says he, "who comes of his own accord, let him (the Brahmin) offer a seat and water, with such food as he is able to prepare, after the due rites of courtesy. A Brahmin coming as a guest, and not received with just honour, takes to himself all the reward of the housekeeper's former virtue, even though he had been so temperate as to live on the gleanings of harvests, and so pious as to make oblations in five distinct fires." Foreseeing that some might be reduced to such a state of poverty, as to have nothing to bestow on the "children of the road," as the Arabs expressively denominate travellers, the legislator adds: "Grass and earth to sit on, water to wash the feet, and, fourthly, affectionate speech, are at no time deficient in the mansions of the good, although they may be indigent."

Indeed, so excellent are the regulations of Menu respecting the treatment of guests and strangers, that they call to mind the noble maxims of the Heroic Ages:

"To Jove the stranger and the poor belong,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrong,"

says Homer; and the practice of the ages he describes was answerable to this Christian sentiment. Menu is hardly less humane in this particular. "No guest must be dismissed, in the evening, by a housekeeper; he is sent by the retiring sun; and, whether he come in fit season, or unseasonably, he must not sojourn in

the house without entertainment. Let not himself eat any delicate food, without asking his guest to partake of it: the satisfaction of a guest will assuredly bring the housekeeper wealth, reputation, long life, and a place in heaven." He, however, desires that strangers may be treated according to their rank and condition in life. "To the highest guests in the best form, to the lowest in the worst, to the equal equally, let him offer seats, resting-places, couches; giving them proportionable attendance when they depart, and honour as long as they stay. Should another guest arrive, when the oblation to all the gods is concluded, for him also let the housekeeper prepare food, according to his ability."

The exercise of hospitality, it must, however, be acknowledged, is in some measure influenced and perverted by ideas of caste. "A military man," says Menu, "is not denominated *a guest* in the house of a Brahmin; nor a man of the commercial or servile class; nor his familiar friend; nor his paternal kinsman; nor his preceptor: but, if a warrior come to his house, in the form of a guest, let food be prepared for him, according to his desire, *after the Brahmins have eaten.*" And, lest the sacerdotal tribe, as they are vulgarly denominated, should consider themselves at liberty to turn all inferior strangers from their doors, the lawgiver adds:—"Even to a merchant or a labourer, approaching his house in the manner of guests, let him give food, showing marks of benevolence at the same time with his domestics[95]."

These texts are a sufficient proof that it was intended by their lawgivers that the Hindoos should practise the virtue of hospitality. If, therefore, they do not practise it, the blame must rest with their own uncharitable, inhuman dispositions, which incline them, we are told, to look with indifference on the sufferings of

[95] Institutes of Menu, chap. iii. ver. 99—112.

others. We have heard the voice of the law; let us now inquire into the facts. "The Brahmins," says Orme, "have made their gods require, besides the necessity of endowing their temples, the practice of all other kinds of charities, by which the necessities of human nature may be relieved. A third part of the wealth of every Hindoo is expended on such occasions. The Brahmins themselves profess great hospitality, and by this address preserve that extreme veneration, which otherwise would be lost through the effects of envy, in a detestation of their impositions[96]."

Here we find, from the avowal of a writer whose views of the Hindoos are highly unfavourable, that the whole nation, including the Brahmins, habitually exercise every kind of charity, to so incredible an extent that every individual Hindoo expends in this way a third part of his property. This, however, we regard as exaggeration. But it is a fair example of that random style in which authors sometimes indulge. It must be perfectly evident that no individual could make such an assertion on his own knowledge, any more than that which immediately follows it, which refers every benevolent action of a Hindoo to a superstitious motive. Our opinion is directly the reverse of Mr. Orme's. We refer the charities, the hospitality of the Hindoo, to the ineradicable sympathies of human nature; and imagine that it is the debasing spirit of his superstition which prevents those virtues from being more frequently and more actively exercised.

Forbes, who when he has to express an opinion of

[96] Oriental Fragments, quoted by Forbes, Orient. Mem. vol. i. p. 227. This writer, it is true, attributes the charity of the Hindoos to superstitious motives, and describes them as "infamous for the want of generosity and gratitude in the commerces of friendship." But we know of no good action the merit of which might not, by this kind of sophistry, be entirely obliterated.

his own, occasionally betrays the embarrassment of a man who is puzzled what to say, unites with Mr. Orme, however, in bearing testimony to the fact that the Hindoos do in reality perform charitable actions; though he is in doubt whether to denominate the spirit which prompts them *real* charity or not. But we will content ourselves with the facts, and leave the motives to be appreciated hereafter, at a more competent tribunal. "Irrigation," says he, "being absolutely necessary in a climate where rain only falls during four months in the year, the preservation of water is a most important object; the Brahmins therefore judiciously persuade their disciples to build reservoirs, and construct wells as the most acceptable charity they can confer: in the Travencore dominions are many expensive works of this kind; some made by the generosity of individuals, others at the public expense. The high roads are planted on each side with cajew-apple, tamarind, and mango trees, which adorn the country, and shade the traveller: caravansaries, or *choultries*, are erected at convenient distances for his accommodation. Charity of this kind is everywhere inculcated; and it is equally the ambition of a southern Malabar as of a northern Hindoo, to have a tank, a well, or a *choultry* called after his name. Under despotic princes, where property is never secure, and to be reputed rich is to be really unfortunate, such munificent acts are far from being uncommon: the fame of these benevolent works and the tranquillity of domestic life, form the chief happiness of a people unaccustomed to public spectacles or the refinements of polished society[97]."

It is, we believe, a rule which may be safely followed in all cases, that the testimony which a man gives unwillingly in favour of another, is of more weight

[97] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 377.

than that of a witness who palpably favours the accused. Accordingly, we should lay considerable stress on the following passage: "The fifth privilege of the Brahmins is that of giving alms and presents; which it may be supposed they indulge in less willingly than in the sixth, which consists in the right of receiving them. But it must be allowed that there are a great number of people of this caste who practise hospitality, and exercise other works of charity. Yet, as in the eyes of all the members of this sect, every other man is an object of indifference, and even of contempt, we may be allowed to lay it down as a general remark, that generosity and compassion are virtues not natural to the Brahmins [98]."

The fragments which remain after a repast are thrown to the dogs, as neither the domestics nor the poor, unless they be Pariahs, will touch them. The alms given to the poor, consist of clean boiled rice, untouched by any one. But they who rigidly follow the usages of caste, more particularly the Brahmins, will not receive it even in this state, but require that it should be given them undressed [99]. As an incitement to charity, the Hindoos, according to the same author, are taught that "good works, such as giving alms to the Brahmins, erecting places of hospitality on the highways, building temples, contributing to the expenses of worship, digging tanks, and many other meritorious acts of charity, when united to the various remedies already described, greatly enhance their efficacy, and contribute exceedingly to the cleansing of the soul from recent stains, as well as from those which have adhered to it from its former existence [100]."

This account applies chiefly to the Mysore and the

[98] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 104.

[99] Ibid. p. 12.

[100] Ibid. p. 127.

Malabar coast; but similar charitable institutions are equally found in other parts of the country. In those districts of Guzerat which lie between Surat and Baroche, there are in most villages public wells and tanks, "where the pilgrim and his cattle are sure of finding abundance of water, except in dry seasons; and then some charitable individual generally alleviates the failure, by placing a person to dispense water gratis from a temporary receptacle [101]." Upon the words of Christ, "whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, in my name, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward," Dr. Clarke observes that "it appears from the most authentic information that the Hindoos go sometimes a great way to fetch water; and then boil it that it may not be hurtful to travellers who are hot; after this they stand from morning to night in some great road where there is neither pit nor rivulet, and offer it in *honour of their gods*, to be drunk by the passengers. This necessary work of charity in those countries, seems to have been practised among the more pious and humane Jews; and our Lord assures them that if they do this *in his name*, they shall not lose their reward. This one circumstance of the Hindoos offering water to the fatigued passengers in *honour of their gods*, is a better illustration of our Lord's words, than all the collections of Harmer on the subject [102]."

The virtue of hospitality in India, as elsewhere, prevails most in the wilder and more unfrequented districts. "I sometimes frequented places," says Forbes, "where the natives had never seen an European, and were ignorant of every thing concerning us; there I beheld manners and customs simple as were those in the patriarchal age; there, in the very style of Rebecca, and the damsels of Meso-

[101] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 215.
[102] Cited by Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 216.

potamia, the Hindoo villagers treated me with that artless hospitality so delightful in the poems of Homer, and other ancient records. On a sultry day, near a Zinore village, having rode faster than my attendants, while waiting their arrival under a tamarind tree, a young woman came to the well; I asked for a little water, but neither of us having a drinking vessel, she hastily left me, as I imagined, to bring an earthen cup for the purpose, as I should have polluted a vessel of metal: but as Jael, when Sisera asked for water, gave him milk and 'brought forth butter in a lordly dish,' so did this village damsel, with more sincerity than Heber's wife, bring me a pot of milk, and a lump of butter on the delicate leaf of the banana, 'the lordly dish of the Hindoos.' The former I gladly accepted: on my declining the latter, she immediately made it up into two balls, and gave one to each of the oxen that drew my hackery. Butter is a luxury to these animals and enables them to bear additional fatigue[103]."

Though from individual examples of virtue nothing general can be concluded, the reader will still be gratified in observing the style in which an opulent Hindoo dispenses his bounty. Lullabhy, a rich *zemîndâr* (a land-holder, or proprietor of land) of Baroche, had, by extensive transactions in the revenue department, acquired a princely fortune. In his dealings with government he was suspected of having exhibited a slight dash of Jewish policy; but "as a charitable man," says Forbes, "this wealthy banian appeared very conspicuous; he daily appropriated a considerable sum of money to alms-giving and relieving persons in distress; no mendicant was dismissed from his gate without a measure of rice, or a mess of vegetable pottage mingled with meal. In time of dearth he distributed grain throughout the

[103] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 503, 504.

villages in the Baroche district; nor was his bounty confined to those of the Hindoo religion. He repaired public tanks and *choultries* for travellers, dug several common wells, and constructed a bowree, or large well, in the Baroche suburbs, with steps leading down to the water, all of hewn stone, in a very handsome style of architecture. A marble tablet, placed over the fountain of this noble reservoir, contains a short inscription more expressive and beautiful in the Persian language than can be given in an English translation:—'The bounties of Lullabhy are ever flowing'[104]."

The presents which this generous individual distributed on the marriage of his son exceeded twelve thousand pounds.

Among the virtues of the Rajpoots, Colonel Tod, who perfectly understands the nation of whom he writes, repeatedly enumerates generosity, courtesy, and the most liberal hospitality. He is not one of those travellers, who, touching at certain points upon the coast, or riding post, as it were, over a few districts, acquire by a kind of intuition peculiar to themselves a complete knowledge of the character and manners of the people. The better part of his life has been spent in India, and among the Hindoos. Chivalrous, courteous, disinterested[105], like the brave race which he describes, he has mingled freely with the natives of all ranks; and may, without the slightest reserve, be pronounced in every sense the

[104] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 250.

[105] All this the author infers from the able and highly interesting work of Colonel Tod, with whom he has not the honour of being personally acquainted. No one, however, can peruse his 'Annals of Rajast'han,' with its numerous anecdotes, and rich illustrations of manners, through which the character of the writer continually peeps forth, without being impressed, as he goes along, with a similar respect for the character of the writer.

best existing authority for whatever relates to the character and manners of the warlike tribes of Northern India. From among the innumerable passages in which he bears testimony to the splendid virtues of the Rajpoots, we select the following, illustrative of the point in question. "Hurba Sankla, at once a soldier and a devotee, was one of those Rajpoot cavaliers 'sans peur et sans reproche,' whose life of celibacy and perilous adventure was mingled with the austere devotion of an ascetic; by turns aiding with his lance the cause which he deemed worthy, or exercising an unbounded hospitality towards the stranger. This generosity had much reduced his resources when Joda sought his protection. It was the eve of the *Sudda Birt*, one of those hospitable rites which, in former times, characterized Rajwarra. This 'perpetual charity' supplies food to the stranger and traveller, and is distributed not only by individual chiefs and by the government, but by subscriptions of communities. Even in Mewar, in her present impoverished condition, the offerings to the gods in support of their shrines and the establishment of the Sudda Birt, were simultaneous. Hospitality is a virtue pronounced to belong more peculiarly to a semi-barbarous condition. Alas! for refinement and ultra-civilization, strangers to the happiness enjoyed by Hurba Sankla. Joda with one hundred and twenty followers came to solicit the 'stranger's fare;' but unfortunately it was too late, the Sudda Birt had been distributed. In this exigence Hurba recollected that there was a wood called *mujd*, used in dyeing, which among other things in the desert regions is resorted to in scarcity. A portion of this was bruised, and boiled with some flour, sugar, and spices, making altogether a palatable pottage; and with a promise of better fare on the morrow, it was set before the young Rao and

his followers, who, after making a good repast, soon forgot Cheetore in sleep. On waking each stared at his fellow, for their mustaches were dyed with their evening's meal; but the old chief, who was not disposed to reveal his expedient, made it minister to their hopes by giving it a miraculous character, and saying that as the grey of age was thus metamorphosed into the tint of morn and hope, so would their fortunes become young, and Mundore again be theirs [106]."

During the wars of Jehângîr, an example of Rajpoot hospitality, accompanied by a remarkable degree of religious toleration, was afforded by the Rana of Oodipoor. Sultan Khorum and Mohabet Khan, defeated by the imperial armies, took refuge at the capital of Mewar. In this asylum the prince "remained undisturbed: apartments in the palace were assigned to him; but his followers little respecting Rajpoot prejudices, the island became his residence, on which a sumptuous edifice was raised adorned with a lofty dome, crowned with the crescent. The interior was decorated with mosaic, in onyx, cornelian, jaspers, and agates, rich Turkey carpets, &c.; and that nothing of state might be wanting to the royal refugee, a throne was sculptured from a single block of serpentine, supported by quadriform female Caryatidæ. In the court a little chapel was erected to the Mohammedan saint Madar, and here the prince with his court resided, every wish anticipated, till a short time before his father's death, when he retired into Persia [107]."

The *choultries* of India, which, like the khans or caravanserais of Musulman countries, are a species of inn where travellers are lodged gratis, generally consist of two square courts enclosed by low buildings, which are covered with a tiled roof, and divided into small apartments for the accommodation of

[106] Annals of Rajast'han, vol i. p. 281, 282.
[107] Ibid. p. 371.

travellers. In many instances, as in that of Vira Permal's choultry, near Conjeveram, these buildings are surrounded on the outside by a colonnade, and are constructed of well-cut granite. The public tanks are of two kinds: the first is that called *eray*, which is formed by throwing a mound or embankment across a valley, or hollow ground; so that the rain-water collects in the upper part of the valley, and, when required for the purposes of cultivation, is let out upon the low lands by sluices. The other kind of tank, which is called *kulam*, intended to supply the natives with water for daily domestic use, is a small lake artificially formed. In the Dekkan these *kulams* "are very frequently lined on all the four sides with cut stone, and are the most elegant works of the natives. By making tanks and choultries, the wealthy Hindoos endeavour to procure a lasting good name; and they certainly deserve it, as the sums they expend in this way are very considerable, and the utility of the works is very great[108]." Princes sometimes imitate the example of their opulent subjects. Vishnu Verdhana Raya, a monarch who reigned about seven hundred years ago, over an extensive kingdom in the Dekkan, constructed a magnificent reservoir capable of furnishing water for the irrigation of a large tract of country; a work which, as Buchanan justly remarks, ought to render this prince's name venerable to the latest posterity[109]. At Madhagiri, in the Telinga country, the same traveller saw in the midst of fine gardens one of the handsomest buildings for the reception of travellers which he had any where met with in India, erected by the public-spirited Mul Rajah[110].

[108] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 10, 11, 12.

[109] Ibid. p. 139. [110] Ibid. p. 362.

Among the *Goalas*[111], or cow-keepers of the Mysore, when the flocks of any family have perished, either by war or pestilence, the sufferers go and solicit a new stock from the other persons of the caste, each of whom will give a beast or two for that purpose. Should they be so unreasonable as to refuse this bounty, the *Beny Chavadi*, or chief of the tribe, will compel them to assist their distressed neighbours. Their charity and benevolence, though sometimes confined to individuals of their own caste, are in many cases magnificent. The *Kudali Swami*, who is *Guru* of all the Mahratta Brahmins, by whom he is regarded as an actual incarnation of the deity, exhibited during the Mahratta wars an eminent example of Hindoo hospitality. "The *Swami* is said to have been of great use in the famine, and to have employed the utmost of his influence in collecting money to support the starving wretches. He daily fed three thousand Brahmins, and other religious mendicants; for according to the Hindoo doctrine it is the charity which is bestowed on religious men, that chiefly procures favour in the eyes of the gods. In his distributions, the Swami is said to have expended six lacs of rupees, or £60,441. 13*s*. 4*d*., most of which was collected in the Mahratta states[112]."

Having thus, with the aid of several eye-witnesses, described the principal features of Hindoo manners, in as far as those manners are illustrative of national character, it remains to draw from these premises such conclusions as they appear to warrant. There is no nation concerning which we ought to be so cautious of hazarding general reflections as the Hindoos. All the natives of India have in most instances, it is true, the air of being descended from the same

[111] Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. ii. p. 5, &c.
[112] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 290.

original stock. Many of their leading ideas, both in religion and civil government, appear in general to assimilate so far as to point to one common source; they have all many superstitions, many customs, and many prejudices in common: but the same thing, in a rather wider sense, may be predicated of all the various families of mankind. No definition of a Hindoo that can be conceived will apply to the whole nation, or even to the majority; unless it be couched in terms so vague that it would admit at the same time the Polynesian, the Malay, the Siamese, and the Burmese. Within the limits of the vast empire of Hindoostan, we find man in every stage of civilization, from the philosopher who reasons calmly and piously on the nature of God, on the universe, on man's condition, both here and hereafter, down to the cannibal savage, to whom God and every spiritual substance is unknown. Of a nation composed of materials so heterogeneous, what can be said? There is no degree of cruelty, no excess of vice, no hardened profligacy, no ineffable abomination, of which we cannot find examples among the Hindoos: but neither is there, on the other hand, any height of virtue which they have not reached.

No priesthood, either ancient or modern, has surpassed the Brahmins in arrogance, duplicity, cruelty, or profligacy of manners. It is to the artifices and unprincipled policy of these men, in fact, that India owes her present degradation. They have, as far as their influence extended, demoralized their country. Addicted to intrigue, hungering and thirsting after empire, they have hesitated at no means of attaining their end. Under the cloak of religion they have in public fomented bloody persecutions, burnings, mutilations, tortures, human victims. Tyrants and slaves, by turns, they have sometimes wielded the

rod of power with ferocity, at others cringed and fawned upon those who stretched it over them. But it should be remembered that the Brahmins are in India what the Levites were among the Hebrews,—a single tribe. Possibly they do not form more than a twentieth part of the population. In many parts of the country their influence is weak; in others it does not exist. Nowhere is it so great as it formerly was. From the beginning, indeed, their attempt to monopolize knowledge, and the power which it confers, was vain. Philosophers of other castes arose, and by the splendour of their genius eclipsed the proudest of these sacerdotal usurpers. In contemplating the Hindoo character, it would therefore be unjust to confine our views to the Brahmins, who form but a small part of the whole nation, and who, besides, are not all deserving of the severe judgment which we have been compelled to pass collectively on the caste. The great majority of the people are of a different stamp. Deficient in that physical and mental energy which forms the characteristic of nations nurtured in liberty, and ripened by a more temperate sun, they naturally endeavour to make up by subtlety and acuteness of intellect for the lack of force and intrepidity; and have thus acquired a reputation for accomplished dissimulation. But every man is prone to dissemble where resentment is impossible; and the Hindoo, when in possession of comparative freedom, as in Rajast'han, rejoices to cast off the slough of hypocrisy, and feels the manly pleasure of having and advancing an opinion of his own.

Despotism, like a perpetual pestilence, has always infested the great countries of Asia, and to this circumstance must we attribute the leading vices of the oriental character. Where the monarchical principle reigns naked, in all its deformity, in all its terrors, life is felt to be eminently uncertain. Like the Persian

courtier of old, every man upon whom the colossal shadow of power has fallen, feels his head to assure himself, as it were, that it is still on his shoulders. As every person reflects that each day may be his last, he snatches with frantic eagerness the enjoyments within his reach. Sensual enjoyments are everywhere most easily commanded. Those afforded by intellectual exertions demand forethought, preparation, and, above all, time, of the possession of which the Oriental is utterly uncertain; from those of power he is in most instances debarred; he, therefore, sinks by a kind of fatal necessity into sensualism, and, once debauched, loses for ever the relish of the superior pleasures of the soul, even should they be placed within his reach.

It is a law of human nature that, in the midst of great calamities, when, from the multiplication of death and agony around, the footing of life is found to be unstable, man should grow heedless, not only of other men's sufferings, but also of his own. No cause is so trifling, but that it will serve a Hindoo as an excuse for throwing off the burden of life. In Western India, a Hindoo charged with the transporting of a sum of money, or with the conducting of a traveller through a forest, happens to be encountered by robbers; to deter them from executing their design, he threatens to shed his blood, and imprecate upon their heads the vengeance of heaven for the crime. In most cases the menace is effectual; but, if the outlaws set him at naught, he cuts his throat before their faces. In other cases, a prince seizes upon a miserable piece of land, supposed to belong to a temple. To compel him to restore it, or in revenge for his refusal, a Brahmin, or a whole troop of Brahmins, proceed to his palace, and shed their blood upon his threshold. A woman is accidentally seen by a foreigner eating her food, which, among

certain tribes of Hindoos, is thought to be indecorous; for this unintentional sin against etiquette, she determines to die, endeavours, like the Roman slave, to beat our her "desperate brains" against the wall, and, failing, prevails upon her own son, by threatening him with a mother's curse, to rid her of her life, for which he is afterwards executed as a murderer.

Notwithstanding these proofs of ferocity of character, which, though they might be greatly multiplied, are sufficient to show the perverted state of society in India, the Hindoos in general are far from being a reckless, unfeeling, savage people. "I do not by any means assent," says Bishop Heber, "to the pictures of depravity and general worthlessness which some have drawn of the Hindoos. They are decidedly by nature a mild, pleasing, intelligent race; sober, parsimonious, and, where an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering. But the magistrates and lawyers all agree, that in no country are lying and perjury so common and so little regarded. Notwithstanding the apparent mildness of their manners, the criminal calendar is generally as full as in Ireland, with gang-robberies, setting fire to buildings, &c.; and the number of children who are decoyed aside, and murdered for the sake of their ornaments, Lord Amherst assures me, is dreadful[113]."

Without calling in question the opinion of the "magistrates and lawyers," whose experience, however, was most likely confined to the country in which they lived, or at farthest, to India and England, which, in this respect, can of course be expected to bear no comparison, it may be remarked that wherever despotism prevails, falsehood and dissimulation among the people are the necessary results. "On the whole," continues the traveller, "they are

113 Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 254.

a lively, intelligent, and interesting people: of the upper classes a very considerable proportion learn our language, read our books and our newspapers, and show a desire to court our society; the peasants are anxious to learn English, and though certainly very few of them have as yet embraced Christianity, I do not think their reluctance is more than might have been expected in any country where a system so entirely different from that previously professed was offered, and offered by those of whom, as their conquerors, they may well entertain considerable jealousy. Their own religion is, indeed, a horrible one; far more so than I had conceived; it gives them no moral precepts; it encourages them in vice by the style of its ceremonies, and the character given of its deities, and by the institution of castes, it hardens their hearts against each other to a degree which is often most revolting[114]."

The bishop then proceeds to relate several anecdotes illustrative of the demoralizing effects of the system of castes, which, as he himself considers them as extraordinary occurrences, can by no means affect our view of the national character. No man would think of taking his conception of the English nation from those solitary monsters which sometimes start up amongst us, and startle the world by their stupendous flagitiousness; of the French, from the massacre of St. Barthélémy, or the Reign of Terror; of the Dutch, from the atrocities of Amboyna. These are horrors, perpetrated by heads turned delirious by crime, at which every civilized man of every nation shudders. Let us act on the same principles in judging of the Hindoos. And, in fact, it is upon these principles that the benevolent and candid Heber proceeds: "The national temper," he observes, "is decidedly good, gentle, and kind;

[114] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 261.

they are sober, industrious, affectionate to their relations; generally speaking faithful to their masters, easily attached by kindness and confidence, and in the case of the military oath, are of admirable obedience, courage, and fidelity in life and death. But their morality does not extend beyond the reach of positive obligations; and where these do not exist, they are oppressive, cruel, treacherous, and every thing that is bad. We have heard much in England of their humanity to animals; I can only say that I have seen no tokens of it in Calcutta....... Do not suppose I am prejudiced against the Hindoos. In my personal intercourse with them, I have seen much to be pleased with, and all which I hear and believe as to what they might be with a better creed, makes me the more earnest in stating the horrors for which their present creed, as I think, is answerable[115]."

If we rightly understand the traveller, by those who are not under the empire of "positive obligations," he means the native rulers of India, who are generally tyrants; and tyrants are much the same all the world over. This opinion, however, was formed upon a slight acquaintance with the people, in the January of 1824, previous to his journey through the interior of the country, during which his opportunities of studying their manners and character were very considerable. Fourteen months later, when he had nearly completed his tour of the whole empire, corrected his opinions, enlarged his experience, and matured his views, we find his judgment of the Hindoo character much more favourable. "Of the people," says he, writing to Mr. Wynn, from Pertaubghur, in Malwah, "so far as their natural character is concerned, I have been led to form, on the whole, a very favourable opinion. They

[115] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 264, 265.

have unhappily many of the vices arising from slavery, from an unsettled state of society, and immoral and erroneous systems of religion. But they are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager after knowledge and improvement, with a remarkable aptitude for the abstract sciences, geometry, astronomy, &c., and for the imitative arts, painting and sculpture. They are sober, industrious, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their children, of tempers almost uniformly gentle and patient, and more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings, than almost any men whom I have met with. Their faults seem to arise from the hateful superstitions to which they are subject, and the unfavourable state of society in which they are placed. But if it should please God to make any considerable portion of them Christians, they would, I can well believe, put the best European Christians to shame. They are the sepoys and irregular horse of whom I chiefly speak, for of these it is that I have happened to see most, having taken all opportunities of conversing with my escort, and having, for several weeks together, had scarcely anybody else to converse with. I find, however, that my opinion of both these classes of men is that of all the officers in the company's service to whom I have named the subject; and so far as my experience reaches, which certainly is not great, I have no reason to suppose that the classes whom I have mentioned, are not a fair average specimen of the other inhabitants of the country[116]."

[116] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 333, 334.

Chapter VIII.

FOOD—STATURE—DRESS—ORNAMENTS—AND DWELLINGS.

The prejudices existing in Europe respecting the Hindoos are innumerable. Those relating to caste, to religion, and to their general manners, we have endeavoured to remove. Our ordinary ideas of their food, of the simplicity of their habits, of their universal abstemiousness, sobriety, and superstitious reluctance to destroy animal life, next present themselves for our consideration. In the imagination of many writers, India has hitherto been a kind of Utopia, where, amid palmyra groves and bloodless altars, a race of gentle character, regarding the inferior animals as their brethren, in whose bodies the souls of their erring forefathers and deceased relations had been lodged in penance, lead a peaceful, harmless life.

This view of the matter is supported, it must be owned, by authorities to which the public are accustomed to attribute considerable weight. The Court of Directors of the East India Company, who should know something of the character and habits of their subjects, inform the world that the great majority of the Hindoos "live all their days upon rice, and go only half-covered with a slight cotton cloth[1]." Montes-

[1] Quoted by Mr. Rickards in his useful and valuable work on India, vol. i. p. 48. The testimony of this writer is entitled to very great respect, not merely because a large portion of his life has been spent in India—for others have lived much longer in that country and yet returned full of prejudices—but because his views are distinguished for sound manly good sense. He

quieu, from whom the Directors would appear to have borrowed their notions of the condition and wants of their own subjects, recurring, as usual, to his favourite ideas on the influence of climate, remarks, that that of the Hindoos "neither requires nor permits the use of almost any of our commodities. Accustomed to go almost naked, the country furnishes them with the scanty raiments they wear; and their religion, to which they are in absolute subjection, instils into them an aversion to that sort of food which we consume. They, therefore, need nothing from us but our metals, which are the signs of value, and for which they give in return the merchandize that their frugality and the nature of the country supply in abundance."

These assertions are to a great extent supported by the testimony of a writer who has passed the better part of his life in Hindoostan, and who is by many regarded as the first existing authority on whatever relates to the customs and manners of the Hindoos. The Abbé Dubois, after delineating a magnificent picture of the knowledge and moral virtues of the ancient Brahmins, whose simple and innocent manners commanded the respect of both kings and people, observes, that, although the Brahmins of the present day have altogether degenerated from the virtues of their ancestors, they still preserve a great deal of their character and habits, exhibiting "a predilection for retirement, and seclusion from the bustle of the world, selecting for their residence villages quite retired, into which they permit no

has also laboured, and we trust not without effect, to remove the erroneous ideas which prevail respecting the character and castes of the Hindoos; and Sir Alexander Johnston, an unprejudiced and competent judge, bore testimony, in his examination before the House of Lords, to the correctness of his views. Report from the Lords, July 8th, 1830, p. 136.

person of any other caste to enter." But the resemblance does not stop here. "They approach still nearer," he continues, "to the manners of their ancestors, by their frequent fasts[2], their daily ablutions, and the manner, nature, and subject of their sacrifices, and, above all, their scrupulous abstinence not only from meat, and all food that has ever had the principle of life, but also from many other productions of nature to which their prejudices and superstition have attached some idea of impurity[3]."

Again, describing the manners of the Sivaïtes, or worshippers of the Lingam, he remarks that "in common with the Brahmins they will on no account partake of animal food, or of any thing that has enjoyed the principle of life, such as eggs, or of many of the simple productions of nature[4]." Of the Brahmins he elsewhere observes that milk is their principal article of food[5]; "but," says he, speaking of their imaginary sins, "the most striking example of the pains taken by the Brahmins to avoid internal defilement, is the abstinence from meat, which they all profess. This is to be understood not as relating to all living creatures merely, but to whatever has had the animating principle, such as eggs of all kinds, from which they are as much restricted as from flesh. They have also retrenched from their vegetable food, which is the great fund of their subsistence, all roots which form a head or bulb in the ground, such as onions; and those also which assume the same shape above ground, like mushrooms, and some others. Or are we to suppose that they had discovered something unwholesome in the one species, and proscribed the other on account

[2] "Feasts" is the word in Dubois, but this is evidently a typographical error.

[3] Description, &c. p. 43.

[4] Ibid. p. 56.

[5] Ibid. p. 104.

of its fetid smell? This I cannot decide; all the information I have ever obtained from those amongst them whom I have consulted on the reasons of their abstinence from them, being, that it is customary to avoid such articles, together with all those that have had the germ of the living principle. This is what is called in India, *to eat becomingly*. Such as use the prohibited articles cannot boast of their bodies being pure, according to the estimate of the Brahmins[6]." Nay, "the habit they acquire, from their infancy," continues the Abbé, "of never eating flesh, and the aversion instilled into them for this species of food, grows up into such a degree of horror, that the sight of any person using it would induce in many of them the reaction of the stomach."

If to the above we add the following passage, the testimony of this writer in favour of the views of Montesquieu and the Directors will be complete. "This abstinence prevails not only among the Brahmins, but, as we have often had occasion to mention, among the various castes who are desirous of conciliating public esteem, and who, being educated in this particular in the same prejudices, keep up an equal aversion to all sorts of animal food. They likewise preserve the same abhorrence of all liquors and drugs that intoxicate, and they would take it as the highest insult if it were proposed to them to taste any thing of that nature. An instance can hardly be found, in their settlements, of any transgression occurring amongst them, and among the Brahmins it is unheard of[7]." He observes, however, in order to lessen the wonder of the thing, that it is no less easy for a Hindoo to abstain from flesh, than for a Jew or Mohammedan to eschew pork.

The rulers of India are by no means reduced, however, to rely, for the maintenance of their po-

[6] Description, &c. p. 117. [7] Ibid. p. 167.

sitions, upon the testimony of a single traveller. Forbes, who had likewise passed the better half of his life in the Company's service, and therefore possessed ample means of acquiring a knowledge of the Hindoo people, remarks of the Brahmins that "their simple diet consists of milk, rice, fruit, and vegetables; they abstain from every thing that either had or could enjoy life, and use spices to flavour the rice, which is their principal food; it is also enriched with ghee, or clarified butter. We cannot but admire the principle which dictates this humanity and self-denial: although did they through a microscope observe the animalculæ which cover the mango, and compose the bloom of the fig, or perceive the animated myriads that swarm on every vegetable they eat, they must on their present system be at a loss for subsistence. Some of the Brahmins carry their austerities to such a length, as never to eat any thing but the grain that has passed through the cow, which being afterwards separated from its accompaniments, is considered by them as the purest of all food. In such veneration is this animal held by the Hindoos." Elsewhere, speaking of the cow, he adds: "A subject of Travancore who is detected selling a bullock to an European is impaled alive! Religious prejudices operate powerfully in the preservation of this animal; but it is politic in a country where milk forms a great part of the food, and oxen are very useful in commerce and agriculture[8]."

From all this it would appear to be established that the Hindoos, and more particularly the Brahmins, religiously abstain from the use of animal food. In fact, this was asserted so late as the year 1830 in the House of Lords[9]. But the assertion must not be

[8] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 70, 71, 377.
[9] Report from the Lords, &c. July 8th, 1830, p. 44.

taken literally. The Hindoos in general, whether of high or low caste, do not subsist, as the Directors seem to imagine, upon rice, or abstain from animal food. Even among the Brahmins no such pious abstinence from every thing which has had the principle of life exists, or ever did exist. Persons of this sacred caste eat animal food, like their neighbours; and if certain individuals, or certain sects among them, abstain, it is simply as a matter of taste, and not from any religious motive; for both by their laws and their scriptures the flesh of animals is expressly permitted to be eaten[10]. There are Hindoos however, both Brahmins and others, who restrict themselves to a vegetable diet; and travellers, according to the good but not infallible old rule, "ex pede Herculem," have from this inferred that the whole nation were Pythagoræans. Their opinions having once obtained currency, it is now, perhaps, too late to broach the truth, which will probably appear more paradoxical than the received fables.

It has been seen that the Abbé Dubois, whose age and experience should have protected him from palpable errors, most explicitly states that the Brahmins, and the Sivaïtes generally, abstain from whatever has contained the principle of life. Elsewhere, having observed that the Saiva Brahmins are in many places employed as servants in the temples, to wash the idols, bring up the offerings of fruit, flowers, incense, &c., he adds: "In many pagodas the Sudras are employed in the same manner as sacrificers. This office is assigned to them, exclusively, in the temples where fowls, sheep, hogs, buffaloes, and other living creatures are immolated. It is probably by exercising this kind of service in the temples, that the Saiva Brahmins have fallen into such contempt." Again, in the same page, he

[10] See Institutes of Menu, chap. v. ver. 36, 56, &c.

observes, "I will say nothing of those who are called in derision *Flesh Brahmins* and *Fish Brahmins*. I have been assured that, in the north of India, and even on the Malabar coast, there are some of them who would eat of both, publicly, and without scruple. And it is added, that this conduct brings no reproach upon them from the Brahmins who abstain[11]." The reason of which is, that it is thought a matter of no particular importance. In the south, however, he still maintains that the Brahmins are rice-eaters, and would expel their carnivorous brethren of the Upper Provinces from their society, should they venture south of the Krishna. He does not absolutely decide whether the Pythagoræans of the south, or the Sarcophagi of the north, are the more genuine representatives of the Brahmins of antiquity; but inclines for the former, "because the usages of the Brahmins, particularly as relating to abstinence from flesh meat, are less difficult in the observance in the warm countries of the south than they are in the cold or temperate regions of the north." If the Brahminical creed had been invented in the south, and travelled northward, it would seem probable that, in expatriating themselves, and removing into a colder country, its followers might "degenerate," as the Abbé expresses it, "from the rules of their early ancestors," and become carnivorous from the effects of climate. But he agrees with us in considering Tartary, or the environs of Mount Caucasus, as the original natal soil of the Brahmins. In such a country, the use of animal food would be rendered almost necessary by the climate; and it therefore appears more probable that it is the southern rice-eaters who have degenerated from the rules of their early ancestors.

[11] Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 49.

The sect of Vishnu composes, in Hindoostan, a very numerous body, and contains individuals of every caste, from the highest, including Brahmins, to the lowest. These sectarians, the Abbé Dubois informs us, belong to the carnivorous part of mankind, of whom they by no means constitute the most abstemious members. "The devotees of Vishnu, and particularly the religious beggars of that sect, are detested by the people in general, chiefly on account of their intemperance. One would imagine that they give themselves up to that vice from a spirit of contradiction to their opponents the Lingamites, whose extreme moderation in eating and drinking equals, if it does not surpass, that of the Brahmins, in imitation of whom they abstain from all animal food. The sectaries of Vishnu, on the contrary, eat publicly of all sorts of meat, excepting that of the cow, and drink toddy, arrack, and all other liquors that the country supplies, without shame or restraint[12]."

But the Vishnuites, if we credit the same authority, are not the only Hindoos who are guilty of intemperance. "The Brahmins, *in general*, add to their other numerous vices that of gluttony. When an opportunity occurs of satiating their appetite, they exceed all bounds of temperance: and such occasions," it is added, "are frequent[13]......Not long ago," says the Abbe, "a fire broke out in a village of Tanjore, in the house of a Brahmin, the only individual of that caste who lived there. All the neighbours came running, and removed the effects which they found in the house. With other things they discovered a large jar filled with *pickled pork*, and another *half full of arrack*. If the accident of the fire afflicted the distressed Brahmin, the discovery made in the house was scarcely less overpowering. It was long kept up as a diverting joke by the inhabi-

[12] Description, &c. p. 53. [13] Ibid. p. 161.

tants of the village as well as of the neighbourhood, through all parts of which the story spread." After all, however, this anecdote tells but little against the caste. We require more extensive evidence, and the Abbé is at hand to supply it. "Transgressions of this kind," he says, "are still more common in the great towns, where it is more easy to procure the proscribed articles, and to enjoy them without detection. I have been credibly informed that some Brahmins, in small companies, have gone very secretly to the houses of Sudras whom they could depend upon, to partake of meat and strong liquors, which they indulged in without scruple. I also know of instances where these same Sudras were permitted to sit down with them, and to join in the same secret abomination. The forbidden dishes which they used in common had been dressed by the Sudras, and to touch any food prepared by persons of another caste is a violation of the rules of the Brahmins still more abhorred than that of eating with them in common[14]."

Intoxication, he observes, is still more common among the Brahmins than the use of interdicted food. Nevertheless, the great majority, we are told, abide religiously by the rules of their caste, abstaining from strong liquors, and other inebriating substances, keeping up a perpetual fast, and touching "nothing that belongs to animals, but milk." There is some difficulty in comprehending how the Brahmins "in general" contrive to be "gluttons" at the same time that they keep up "a perpetual fast;" but let that pass. Proceed we to an anecdote of a fowl and mutton eating Brahmin, which is highly characteristic. The stomach of a Hindoo is supposed to be under the direction of his spiritual guide, who, in case of grave delinquency—for example, if he eat

[14] Description, &c. p. 168.

a porcupine, a snake, or an onion—has the power to expel him from his caste. Latterly, it would seem, this power has been exercised rather tenderly, the number of offenders probably exceeding that of the rigid rice-eaters, or, at least, being so great as to make any exposure of their peccadilloes impolitic. "Being at Dharmapuri, a small town in the Carnatic, while a Guru Brahmin was making his visitation of the district, one of the caste was accused before him of having openly violated the rules respecting food, and even of turning them publicly into ridicule. The accusation was as well founded as it was important. The culprit was brought up before the Guru, who had previously taken the evidence against him, and now decreed that he should be divested of the cord. At this awful moment the man, apparently unmoved under so grievous a punishment, advanced to the middle of the assembly where the Guru was seated, and after performing the *sashtangam* in the most respectful way, addressed his judge nearly in the following terms:—

"So you, with your council, have decided that I am to be divested of my cord. It will be no great loss to me. Two bits of silver will get me another. But I desire to know what your motive can be for degrading me in this public manner. Is it because I have eaten meat? If that is the only reason, why does not the justice of a Guru, which ought to be impartial, extend its severity alike over all offenders? Why should I be the only person accused out of so great a number of delinquents? I look on one side, and there I see two or three of my accusers, with whom I joined not long ago in devouring a good leg of mutton. Here, on the other side, I turn my eyes and I see some more of them, with whom I dined the other day, at the house of a Sudra, where we cut up an excellent pullet. Allow me only to give

their names; and I will also accuse many others whose consciousness has detained them from appearing at this assembly. But if you will allow me I will instantly bring testimony of the facts and justify my accusation." The Guru was evidently puzzled how to proceed, after a discourse on so delicate a subject, and delivered with so much intrepidity. But recovering himself, he cried out with much presence of mind: "Who has brought this prattler hither? Don't you see the fellow is mad? turn him out, and let us be no longer tormented with his nonsense[15]." And in this happy way the Guru extricated himself from considerable embarrassment.

One reason for abstaining, in very warm countries, from animal food, is that the persons of those who eat it exhale a fetid odour, perceptible to the fine sense of smelling of a Pythagoræan, twenty-four hours after the meal. Upon this fact, no doubt, is founded that curious distinction, noticed by Dubois[16], with regard to abstinence from this kind of aliment, which prevails among certain castes, where the men indulge in, while the women reject it. Simplicity of food greatly increases the delicacy and fragrance of the person, as may be observed in children, which, when taken from the breast, always lose a portion of that fine transparent complexion and inexpressible sweetness both of breath and person which distinguish them in the early morning of their days.

But the most powerful reason why the Hindoos in many cases actually do abstain from the flesh of animals, is one which would be thought valid in most countries: *they are too poor to procure it.* "In general, they eat nothing but seeds, or such insipid matters; for, though most of them cultivate rice, which appears to be a production of nature in the highest degree suited to the use of man, and well

[15] Description, &c. p. 169, 179. [16] Description, &c. p. 119.

adapted to sustain his vigour, the mass of the people do not use it for their ordinary fare. They are obliged to sell it to get what is necessary for paying their taxes, to procure clothes, and supply their other domestic wants. After disposing of their crop of rice, they nourish themselves for the rest of the year in the best way they are able, upon the various sorts of small seeds, similar to what are given in Europe to pigs and chickens: and it were to be wished that every Hindoo had even this sorry fare at his command [17]."

If there be in India any one tribe or caste more noble, high-minded, and uncontaminated than the rest, it is that of the Kshatriyas, or Rajpoots. Yet these are eminently carnivorous. When not engaged in war, which they regard as their profession, they usually, at the proper season of the year, devote a large portion of their time to the pleasures of the chace. Among the larger game, the most common is the wild boar. Of the flesh of this animal they appear to be particularly fond; and they pursue it with the utmost ardour. But the covers afforded by the nature of their country, especially the fields of maize, which there grows to the height of ten or twelve feet, not unfrequently affords the boar a chance of escape. In the barren plains of Marwar, maize porridge is the common fare; but in Mewar, the paradise of the Rajpoot, the luxury of wheaten bread is well understood. Maize and Indian corn, gathered in an unripe state, are tied into bundles, roasted in the ear, and eaten with a little salt. For the introduction of melons and grapes, which at present form the principal dessert of the Hindoos, India is indebted to the Emperor Baber, the most ingenuous and chivalrous of Eastern conquerors. Tobacco was introduced by his grandson Jehângîr. When or by

[17] Dubois, p. 201, 202.

whom the use of opium was made known to the Rajpoots is not known; but "this pernicious plant," says an acute observer, "has robbed the Rajpoot of half his virtues." Under the influence of opium his natural bravery often degenerates into ferocity, while his countenance, when he is not thus excited, has an air of drowsy imbecility.

From the earliest ages the soldiers of Hindoostan, like those of most other countries, have been addicted to intoxicating drinks; but these, though still in favour, are secondary in importance to the opiate. "To eat opium together, is the most inviolable pledge, and an agreement ratified by this ceremony is stronger than any adjuration. If a Rajpoot pays a visit, the first question is, *umul kya?* 'have you had your opiate?'—*umul kao*, 'take your opiate.' On a birth-day, when all the chiefs convene to congratulate their brother on another knot to his years, the large cup is brought forth, a lump of opium put therein, upon which water is poured, and by the aid of a stick a solution is made, to which each helps his neighbour, not with a glass, but with the hollow of his hand held to his mouth. To judge by the wry faces on this occasion, none can like it, and to get rid of the nauseous taste, comfit balls are handed round. It is curious to observe the animation it inspires; a Rajpoot is fit for nothing without his *umul*, and I have often dismissed their men of business to refresh their intellects by a dose, for when its effects are dissipating they become mere logs. Opium to the Rajpoot is more necessary than food[18]."

Scarcely any kind of animal food is rejected by the Rajpoot, excepting such as by all civilized nations has been accounted unclean. His game consists of the hare, the deer, the boar, the elk, the buffalo; and of the wild-dog, the hyæna, the wolf, and the tiger;

[18] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 644, 645.

of which, the latter class are destroyed as noxious. The votaries of *Caniya*, who have taken refuge in his sanctuary at Nât'hdwârâ, confine themselves, in penance, to a vegetable diet, which consists of dried fruits, spices, and curd, which, however, in these degenerate days, are seasoned with rose-water, amber, and all the aromatics of the East. When entertaining Europeans, the Rajpoots, fearful that their dishes may not be suited to the palates of their guests, sometimes request them to bring along with them their *cuisine*. An example of this occurred to Colonel Tod at Jodpoor. Having been invited to dinner by the Rajah, the prince added to the invitation the above curious request, as he feared that the fare of the dessert might prove unpalatable. " But this," says the traveller, " I had often seen done in Sindia's camp, where joints of mutton, fowls, and fricassees would diversify the provender of the Mahratta. I intimated that we had no apprehension that we should not do justice to the gastronomy of Jodpoor; however we sent our tables, and some claret to drink long life to the King of Maroodes. Having paid our respects to our host, he dismissed us, with the complimentary wish that appetite might wait upon us, and, preceded by a host of gold and silver sticks, we were ushered into a hall, where we found the table literally covered with curries, pillous, and ragouts of every kind, in which was not forgotten, the *hari moong Mundore ra*, 'the green pulse of Mundore,' the favourite dish next to *rabri* or maize-porridge of the simple Rahtore. Here, however, we saw displayed the dishes of both the Hindoo and Musulman, and nearly all were served in silver. The curries were excellent, especially those of the vegetable tribes made of the pulses, the kakris or cucumbers, and of a miniature melon, not larger than an egg, which grows spontaneously in these regions, and is

transported by kasids or runners, as presents, for many hundred miles round[19]."

Fruit, as might be expected from its plenty and cheapness, enters largely into the food of the Hindoos[20]. Their groves and gardens supply an abundance of guavas, plantains, bananas, custard-apples, tamarinds, oranges, limes, citrons, grapes, pine-apples, and pomegranates. But of all the fruits of India the best as well as the most plentiful is the mango, which is found in all parts of the country, even in the forests. The tree which produces it, equal in size to a large English oak, in foliage and appearance more nearly resembles the Spanish chesnut. The superior kinds of mango are extremely delicious, being not unlike the large yellow Venice peach, heightened by the flavour of the orange and anana. During the residence of Forbes in Guzerat, six hundred pounds weight of this fruit was sold for a rupee. It accordingly formed, in the mango season, the principal diet of the poor, and was supposed to be very nutritious. The Chili pepper[21], and the cardamom, a pleasant spice from the Malabar coast, form a principal ingredient in curries.

The Hindoos are particularly fond of wild honey, which is found in the clefts of the rocks, in caverns, and on the summits of scarped rugged mountains. Of fish likewise, whether fresh or salted, they constantly make use. Whole tribes of men subsist by catching them, and they are conveyed in vast quantities into the interior. Many natives of Concan are addicted to the chace, and eat the flesh of deer, hares, quails, partridges, and pigeons[22]. The *Chensu*, a tribe inhabiting the hilly country above Malabar,

[19] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 732

[20] Ibid. p. 267, 278, 516, 565, 644, 662, 732.

[21] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 29, 30, 32.

[22] Ibid. p. 53, 84, 197.

destroy and kill all kinds of game. The *Telinga Banijigaru*, who are worshippers of Vishnu, and are all either merchants, farmers, or porters, eat sheep, goats, hogs, fowls, and fish, and, though prohibited the use of spirituous liquors, may intoxicate themselves with *bang*. The *Madigas*, who dress hides, make shoes, or cultivate the ground, eat not only all kinds of animal food, but even carrion; and openly drink spirituous liquors. The *Ruddi*, a very respectable caste of Sudras, chiefly employed in agriculture, eat hogs, sheep, goats, venison, and fowls; and are permitted the use of *bang*. Buchanan observes, in speaking of this tribe, that to consider the Kshatriyas as the military caste seems to be an error; because the Ruddi, as well as all other Sudras engaged in agriculture, have always formed a part of the native foot militia, which seems to have been established throughout India. In the armies of native princes they likewise composed the most considerable body.

The *Palliwanlu*, a tribe of Tamul extraction, who are either farmers or gardeners, both eat animal food and drink spirituous liquors. Mutton and fish may lawfully be eaten by the *Muchaveru*, or shoemakers, who, contrary to the practice of persons of this caste in Europe, are expected to abstain from spirituous liquors. To make up in some measure for this extraordinary prohibition they are permitted to marry as many wives as they please. Exactly the same thing may be predicated of the *Telingana Uparu*, whose proper occupation, as fixed by their legislators, is building mud walls, particularly of forts; but as neither huts nor mud forts are sufficiently in request to employ the whole caste, they have taken the liberty to set aside the rules established by the wisdom of their ancestors, and are now engaged in agriculture and other pursuits. The

Wully Tigulas, another Tamul tribe; the *Teliga Devangas*, of the sect of Siva; the *Baydaru*, who are soldiers and hunters, likewise of the sect of Siva; the *Curubas*, soldiers and cultivators; and the *Canara Devangas*, all eat animal food, and, in many instances, drink spirituous liquors[23]. The tastes of the *Niadis*, an outcast tribe of Malabar, are extremely peculiar. They refuse to perform any kind of labour, and consequently are plunged in the deepest poverty. Unable to catch fish or kill game, they subsist upon wild roots, and whatever they can get by begging; but are occasionally fortunate enough to kill a tortoise, or hook a crocodile, the flesh of which, like the Nubians, they reckon delicious food. The *Bacadaru*, a tribe of Carnata origin, now sunk into slavery, not only eat animal food, but, to borrow the expressive language of Buchanan, "may lawfully intoxicate themselves;" an advantage which, we find, is denied to the cobblers.

The *Pariahs*, who, as we have already observed, amount to about thirty millions of souls, do not ab-

[23] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 169, 242, 243, 252, 254, 258, 261, 303, 304, 339, 353, 358, 396, 420. To avoid the repetition of the same thing in the text, we will here enumerate the other castes of southern India, who are commonly known to make use of animal food. The *Goalas*, or shepherds, vol. ii. p. 13. The *Bestas*, farmers and lime-burners, 25. The Mysore farmers, 88. The *Curubaru*, who eat every thing but beef, even carrion, 127, 129. The *Naimars*, or *Nairs*, who, although properly Vishnuites, wear the mark of Siva, 410—412. The *Tiars*, 416. The *Mogayer*, or fishermen, vol. iii. 22. The *Biluaras*, who extract the juice from the palm tree, 53. The *Corar*, 100. This caste may lawfully eat tigers, but reject dogs and snakes, p. 101. The *Handi Curubas*, 336. It would not be difficult to extend this list, but the above specimens will suffice; particularly as all these tribes inhabit the Peninsula, where, according to Sir Alexander Johnston, the customs and manners of the Hindoos subsist in the greatest purity.

stain even from beef. They possibly form a portion of the aboriginal population, who, refusing, on the rise of Brahminism, to adopt the prejudices of the new sect, were anathematized and excommunicated by those revengeful priests. Forbes himself, when experience had removed the prejudices he had brought out with him from Europe, discovered that many of the Bengal Brahmins eat fish, and several sorts of animal food; and that they are not only allowed them, but at some particular ceremonies they are enjoined to do so. However, he observes, that in Guzerat a different practice prevails. But the Mahrattas, though all Hindoos, and "the lower classes especially, eat of almost every thing that comes in their way; as mutton, goat, wild hog, game, and fish. Major Moor mentions two places by name where the Mahrattas *eat beef*, and permit cattle to be killed, and publicly exposed to sale[24]." He then adds:—"The lower tribes of Hindoos are not so scrupulous as the higher about what they eat, or what they touch; especially if they are not observed by others. When at a distance from their

[24] Forbes tells a story illustrative of the scruples of the lower Hindoos which is too good to be omitted: "I knew a gentleman," he says, "who having formed a party for a little excursion into the country, provided a round of beef, as a principal dish in the cold collation: as he was going on horseback he desired the beef might be covered with a cloth, and put into his palanquin to keep it cool; the bearers refused to carry a vehicle which contained such a pollution. The gentleman, on finding that neither remonstrances, entreaties, or threats, were of any avail, cut off a slice of the meat, and eating it in their presence, desired them to carry him to the place of rendezvous. This produced the desired effect; the bearers were the first to laugh at their folly, and exclaimed, 'Master come wise man, with two eyes; while poor black man come very foolish, with only one:' and taking up the palanquin with the beef, set off towards the tents in great good humour." Vol. i. p. 2; ii. 139.

families, and out of sight of their priests, many divest themselves of these nice ideas of purity. Those domesticated with Europeans generally affect to be very scrupulous; an English table covered with a variety of food is necessarily surrounded by a number of servants of different castes to attend the guests. At Baroche, Surat, and Bombay, a Hindoo will not remove a dish that has been defiled with beef, a Mohammedan cannot touch a plate polluted by pork, nor will a Parsee take one away on which is hare or rabbit. I never knew more than one Parsee servant who would snuff a candle, from a fear of extinguishing the symbol of the deity he worships, nor would this man ever do it in the presence of another Parsee[25]."

It was probably from their attendants, who affected all this scrupulousness, that our older English travellers acquired their erroneous ideas respecting the food and habits of the Hindoos. Their errors, however, have been widely diffused, and would still appear to be but too deeply rooted in the general mind, since even so learned and reflecting a man as Heber was not, as he himself observes, emancipated from their influence, until by his own experience in the country he had discovered how destitute of foundation they were. "I had always heard," he remarks, "and fully believed till I came to India, that it was a grievous crime, in the opinion of the Brahmins, to eat the flesh or shed the blood of any living creature whatever[26]." But he had not sailed up the Ganges to Calcutta before he found himself compelled to abandon this belief. Among the merchant ships and Maldive boats, which crowded the Hoogly, and seemed to reproduce the naval activity of the Thames, he saw the little barks of numerous

[25] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 138.
[26] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 347, 8vo. edit.

fishermen, who were employed in catering for the appetites of their wealthy countrymen, Brahmins as well as others. Fish, our traveller now found, " is considered as one of the purest and most lawful kinds of food. Nothing, indeed, seems more generally mistaken than the supposed prohibition of animal food to the Hindoos. Thus many Brahmins eat both fish and kid. The Rajpoots, besides these, eat mutton, venison, or goat's flesh. Some castes may eat any thing but fowls, beef, or pork; while pork is with others a favourite diet, and beef only is prohibited." He then adds, that though intoxicating liquors are by their religion forbidden to the Hindoos, the prohibition is very generally disregarded by persons of all ranks[27]. Afterwards, in his voyage up the Ganges toward Benares, he always found his Hindoo attendants ready enough to make use of the fish which he good-naturedly bestowed upon them[28]. Many Brahmins, he was, moreover, informed by Mr. Warner, magistrate of the Furreedpoor districts, were addicted to intoxication, and were found among the *Decoits*, the most atrocious of all banditti[29].

In proportion as the experience of this able and unprejudiced traveller increased, the stronger became the conviction that the notions usually enter-

[27] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 9. He seems, however, to have considered the seapoys generally as sober water-drinkers, vol. ii. p. 202.

[28] Id. p. 134. " I saw here," says he, " a succession of baskets opening out of one another, like traps, or rather on the principle of the eel-net in England, for catching fish, which, once entered, cannot conveniently turn round, and therefore go on to a chamber contrived at the end, the entrance to which is guarded with sharp reeds pointing inwards, like a mouse-trap." Vol. i. p. 237, 238. See, on this subject of flesh and fish-eating, &c. vol. ii. p. 111, 117, 208, 466.

[29] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 217.

tained in Europe respecting the Pythagoræan habits of the Brahmins and Hindoos in general were wholly unfounded. "You may be, perhaps, as much surprised as I was," he observes, writing to a friend, "to find that those who can afford it are hardly less carnivorous than ourselves; that even the purest Brahmins are allowed to eat mutton and venison." And again, in another letter to a friend, he adds, "I have now myself seen Brahmins of the highest caste cut off the heads of goats as a sacrifice to Durga (Bhavani); and I know from the testimony of Brahmins, as well as from other sources, that not only hecatombs of animals are offered in this manner as a meritorious act (a Rajah about twenty-five years back offered sixty thousand in one fortnight), but that any person, Brahmins not excepted, eats readily of the flesh of whatever has been offered up to one of their divinities, while among almost all the other castes, mutton, pork, venison, fish, any thing but beef and fowls, are consumed as readily as in Europe[30]."

Herodotus, whose errors, as they are termed, the ignorant and superficial are so fond of dwelling upon, had heard a rumour that there were cannibals in India, who were said to eat even the bodies of their parents. To persons unacquainted with the excesses into which superstition has hurried men, in all ages and countries, this report necessarily appeared fabulous; and the *Calantiæ* and the *Padæi* were supposed never to have existed, except in the fertile imagination of the Greek historian. We find, however, the charge of cannibalism renewed by a modern author of considerable reputation. "Not only do the Hindoos, even the Brahmins, eat flesh; but they eat (one sect at least) human flesh. They do not, I conclude, kill human subjects to eat, but they

30 Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 251, 277, 347.

eat such as they find in or about the Ganges, and perhaps other rivers. The name of the sect is *Paramahansa;* and I have received authentic information of individuals of this sect being not very unusually seen about Benares, floating down the river on, *and feeding on a corpse*[31]. Nor is this a low despicable tribe; but on the contrary, esteemed by themselves at least, as a very high one; and my information stated that the human brain is judged by these epicurean cannibals as the most delicious morsel of their unsocial banquet. It may be difficult for the English reader to believe this hitherto unrecorded story of these flesh-abhorring Hindoos, as well perhaps as the now fully authenticated facts of their prodigality of human life. Anecdotes to a considerable extent might easily be collected of the sanguinary propensity of these people, such as would startle those who have imbibed certain opinions from the relations of travellers, on the character and habits of the abstinent and flesh-abhorring Hindoos, and Brahmins with souls as unspotted as the robes they wear[32]."

[31] Whether or not a putrid corpse may thus be transformed into a canoe, we must leave to natural philosophers to determine. It were to be wished, however, that Major Moor had himself witnessed the phenomenon; for, if properly authenticated, it would be among the most extraordinary examples of the depravity of human taste that have ever been described by travellers.

[32] Moor's Hindoo Pantheon, ap. Forbes, vol. i. p. 398, 399. To complete this horrid picture, we copy from Forbes an anecdote which may well keep in countenance Bruce's description of an Abyssinian banquet. "It is well known," says this traveller, "that in some of the districts near Bengal, there is a tribe of people called *Sheep-eaters*, who seize the animal alive, and actually devour wool, skin, flesh, and entrails, until nothing remains but the skeleton. Lady Anstruther, who made a valuable collection of drawings during her residence in India, has a set of paintings in water colours, done by a native, which contains the whole process of these extraordinary glut-

Among all these cannibals and carnivorous people, however, there are undoubtedly many Brahmins and others who rigidly abstain from all kinds of animal food. Nevertheless their aliments are sufficiently varied. The feast of one of these vegetable Brahmins generally consists of seasoned bread, rice, curry, vegetables, pickles, and a dessert. Their ordinary bread is prepared from the flour of wheat, juari, or bajera. To this they are fond of adding a thin cake or wafer, "made from the flour of *oord*, highly seasoned with assafœtida; a salt called *popper-khor;* and a very hot massaula, composed of turmeric, black pepper, ginger, garlic, several kinds of warm seeds, and a quantity of the hottest Chili pepper." All these ingredients are kneaded together with the oord-flour and water into a tenacious paste, which is then rolled into cakes thin as a wafer, which, having been first dried a little in the sun, are then baked, like the oaten cakes of the Scotch, until they are quite crisp. The Brahmini curry is generally nothing more than warm buttermilk, thickened with grain-flour, and slightly seasoned with spices. Another of their favourite dishes is composed of a sort of split pea, boiled with salt and turmeric, and eaten with *ghee*, or clarified butter. "When the dinner is prepared the Brahmin first washes his body in warm water, during which operation he wears his *dotee*, or that cloth which, fastened round his loins, hangs down to his ancles: when washed, he hangs up the dotee to dry, and binds in its place

tons, from the first seizure of the unfortunate animal, until it is completely devoured." Vol. i. p. 400. A lithographic sketch, made after a similar set of paintings, of a sheep-eater in the various stages of his disgusting meal, is published in the third volume of the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, accompanied with a brief memoir by General Hardwicke.

a piece of silk, it not being allowable for a Brahmin to wear any thing else when eating. If a person of another caste, or even a Brahmin who is not washed, touches his dotee while drying, he cannot wear it without washing it again. After going through several forms of prayer and other ceremonies, he sits down to his food, which is spread on a table-cloth, or rather a table-cover, formed of fresh gathered leaves, fastened together to the size wanted for the company. The dishes and plates are invariably composed of leaves; a Brahmin may not eat out of any thing else. Tin vessels, or copper tinned, may be used for cooking; but a Brahmin cannot eat out of them. The food, after being prepared in the kitchen, is placed in distinct portions, on dishes of different size, form, and depth, on the large verdant covering in a regular manner. In the centre of the cover is always a large pile of plain boiled rice, and at a feast there are generally two other heaps of white and yellow rice, seasoned with spices and salt; and two of sweet rice, to be eaten with *chatna*, pickles, and stewed vegetables: the latter are chiefly berenjals, bendre turoy, and different kinds of beans, all savourily dressed, and heated with chilies of every description. The *chatna* is usually made from a vegetable called *cotemear*, to the eye very much resembling parsley, but to those unused to it, of a very disagreeable taste and smell: this is so strongly heated with chilies, as to render the other ingredients less distinguishable. The chatna is sometimes made with cocoa-nut, lime-juice, garlic, and chilies, and, with the pickles, is placed in deep leaves round the large cover, to the number of thirty or forty, the Hindoos being very fond of this stimulus to their rice. These pickles are not prepared with vinegar, but preserved in oil and salt, seasoned with chilie and the acid of tamarinds, which in a

salted state is much used in Hindoostan. Brahmins and many other Hindoos reject the onion from their bill of fare. Ghee, which, in deep boats formed of leaves, seems to constitute the essence of the dinner, is plentifully dispensed. The dessert consists of mangoes, preserved with sugar, ginger, limes, and other sweatmeats; syrup of different fruits, and sometimes a little ripe fruit; but the dessert is not common. Such is the entertainment of a rich Brahmin who eats no animal food[33]."

The poor, whose means will not allow them to think of animal food, consider themselves fortunate when they can command a little rice, with a few wild herbs gathered in the fields. Others are compelled to content themselves with the seed of the bamboo, or such small, insipid, innutritive grain as are cheap and plentiful. It is probable, though there is no positive testimony to the fact, that the lotus-seed is sometimes eaten. Vetches are esteemed a great delicacy; as also are cakes fried in cocoa-nut oil. The Hindoo uses the right hand only in eating. The use of knives, forks, spoons, &c., he abjures as an abomination; he drinks out of a brass cup, or from the hollow of his hand; but is always careful that the vessel, when any is used, does not touch his lips. This peculiarity of manners was noticed by the Portuguese, in the first voyage of Vasco de Gama. After the collation which was served up to them at the palace of the Zamorin, and which consisted of figs, jakas, &c., water was brought in in a golden cup. The Portuguese, who had been informed what was required by etiquette, endeavoured to conform to the mode; but being unused to drink in this manner, they either overcharged their throats, which made them cough, or pouring the liquor on one side, wet their clothes, and set

[33] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii, p. 49—51.

the whole court in a roar of laughter[34]. The times fixed by the Sâstras for eating are, one o'clock in the morning, and two in the afternoon; but these irregular hours are not observed.

Having examined the principal modern authorities respecting the food of the Hindoos, it remains to notice the directions of their celebrated lawgiver on this contested subject. It has been doubted whether the Hindoos had any thing answering to our "grace" before meals. Menu commands it expressly. "Let him honour all his food, and eat it without contempt; when he sees it, let him rejoice, and be calm, and pray that he may always obtain it[35]." The food of hermits, he informs us, consisted of wild grain and milk. He then enumerates the articles of which the offerings to the manes of deceased ancestors should consist, and which, when the ceremony had been duly performed, were eaten by the Brahmin and his guests: these were fish, venison, mutton, "the flesh of such birds as the twice-born may eat;" kids, spotted deer, the antelope called *éna*, the *ruru*, wild boars, wild buffaloes, rabbits, hares, tortoises, cow's milk, the flesh of the long-eared white goat, and the flesh of the rhinoceros[36]. Brahmins are also by law permitted the use of perfume; but so long as its "unctuosity" remains on their body they are forbidden to read the Vedas. What makes it perfectly evident that it was superstition, not humanity, that dictated the abstinence of the twice-born from the flesh of the cow[37], and certain other animals, is this, that garlic,

[34] Knox's Collection of Voyages and Travels, 8vo. vol. ii. p. 324; Ward, vol. i. p. 199, 200; Dubois, p. 112, 115; Forbes, vol. iii. p. 275.

[35] Institutes, &c. ch. ii. ver. 54.

[36] Ibid. ch. iii. ver. 268-272.

[37] It is clear from the *Sama Veda*, that anciently even the

onions, leeks, mushrooms, all vegetables raised in dung, red greens or raisins, exuding from trees, and rice-pudding boiled with *tila* (oil made of sesamum seeds), are equally prohibited. "Flesh-meat also, the food of gods, and clarified butter" (which are clearly put upon a level), were allowed to be eaten only when grace had been said over them, or as Menu expresses it, "touched, while holy texts were recited." The Brahmin is directed, however, to abstain from the flesh of wild beasts and carnivorous birds, meat kept at a slaughter-house, and dried meat. But "beasts and birds of excellent sorts may be slain by Brahmins for sacrifice, or for the sustenance of those whom they are bound to support; since Agastya did this of old." The legislator then adds: "For the sustenance of the vital spirit, Brahmâ created all this animal and vegetable system; and all that is moveable or immoveable that spirit devours. Things fixed are eaten by creatures with locomotion; toothless animals, by animals with teeth; those without hands, by those to whom hands were given; and the timid by the bold. He who eats according to law commits no sin, even though every day he taste the flesh of such animals as may lawfully be tasted; since both animals who may be eaten, and those who eat them, were equally created by Brahmâ." Nay, not only is the eating of animal food per-

cow was killed and eaten like other animals, particularly on the arrival of a guest, who was thence denominated *Goghna*, or, "the cow-killer." In compliance with ancient custom the cow is still brought in and tied; but the guest intercedes for her; a barber, who attends for that purpose, as if the animal were to be shaved, sets her loose, and the guest, addressing the animal, exclaims, "I have earnestly entreated this prudent person, saying, kill not the innocent harmless cow, who is mother of *Rudras*, daughter of *Vasus*, sister of *Adityas*, and the source of ambrosia." Colebrooke, Essay 3, on the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos; Asiat. Res. vol. vii. p. 288—293.

mitted, it is enjoined, and the abstaining from it, on proper occasions, is denounced as a heinous sin: "the man who, engaged in holy rites according to law, refuses to eat it, shall sink in another world, for twenty-one births, to the state of a beast[38]."

The physiognomy and stature of the Hindoos have, says Sir William Jones, been described with great exactness and picturesque elegance by Lord, in his rare but valuable work. "A people," he says, "presented themselves to mine eyes, clothed in linen garments somewhat low descending, of a gesture and garb, as I may say, maidenly and well nigh effeminate, of a countenance shy and somewhat estranged, yet smiling out a glozed and bashful familiarity." This brief description, however, conveys but an imperfect idea of the Hindoos. Their stature, complexion, physiognomy, like their character, differ so exceedingly in different parts of the country, that in fact no general picture can possibly suit the various dissimilar races which compose the people whom we call Hindoos. Among the Rajpoots and mountaineers of the north are frequently found men of gigantic stature and Herculean proportions, who would be considered remarkable in any country in Europe for their size and muscular power[39]. In general, the inhabitants of the plain are inferior in height, and of a more slender make; but both the latter and the former are of an agile, graceful form, and capable of enduring considerable fatigue. Few deformed persons are seen. But, from various causes, blindness is not uncommon.

[38] Institutes of Menu, chap. v. ver. 5—35.

[39] "Gokul Das, the last chief (of Deoghur), was one of the finest men I ever beheld in feature and person. He was about six feet six, perfectly erect, and a Hercules in bulk. His father at twenty was much larger, and must have been nearly seven feet high." Colonel Tod, Annals, &c. p. 191.

The complexion of the Hindoos, according to climate and circumstances, varies from a dark olive, approaching to black, to a light, transparent, beautiful brown, with still an olive tinge, resembling that of the natives of northern Italy or Provence. The Pariahs are said, by some writers, to be dark, while the Brahmins are fair; and they have a proverb which says,—" Never trust a black Brahmin, or a white Pariah;" but the rule by no means holds generally, many persons of low caste, and numerous wild mountain hordes, being much fairer than their superiors.

The Hindoos seldom betray in their countenances the fiery passions which are at work within. Their look is calm, placid, prepossessing; with nothing of the sinister aspect of the Malay or the impassioned expression of the Persians or Arabs. The face of the Hindoo is oval; his forehead moderately large and high; his eyes and hair are black; though mention is made in the Institutes of Menu of women with reddish hair. His eyebrows are finely turned, and his nose and mouth of an European cast. The women, when not exposed to the air, or stunted by severe labour, are often possessed of extraordinary beauty. "Their forms are delicate and graceful; their limbs finely tapered and rounded; their features mild; their eyes dark and languishing; their hair fine and long; their complexions glowing as if they were radiant; and their skins remarkably polished and soft[40]." Of all the Hindoo women those of the Brahminical caste seem to bear away the palm of loveliness, more particularly those of the Canara and Malabar coasts, who might perhaps sustain no disadvantageous com-

[40] Picture of India, vol. ii. p. 307. The author has here used, with taste and judgment, the materials furnished by Forbes and Orme, and therefore we have not scrupled to borrow his language. See Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 73.

parison with the women of Georgia and Circassia. Whatever may be the case with the other females of their nation, these, at least, are susceptible and highly impassioned. Love is the sole delight they know. Their constant ablutions, their delicate care of their persons, their perfumes, their dress, their rich elegant ornaments, render them objects of desire; and the warmth of their feelings, which has been frequently remarked, confers durability on the affections they inspire. The beauties of form attributed to their countrywomen in general are found in a still higher degree of perfection in them. The contour of the neck and shoulders is exceedingly lovely, the bosom beautifully formed; the limbs slender, but exquisitely moulded; the feet and hands delicately small; their air and motions easy, graceful, and dignified. Nor are the beauties of the countenance inferior to those of the figure. The face is of the finest oval, like the Greek; the nose long and straight; the lips ruddy, and the upper one beautifully curved; the mouth rather small; the chin round, and, in most cases, dimpled, *amoris digitulo*. The eyes, shaded by long dark lashes, and surmounted by finely arched slender eyebrows, are full, black, humid, sparkling with fire, yet neither wanton nor petulant[41]. Their complexion, light olive or bronze, bespeaks their nearness to the sun, something of whose warmth and splendour seems to beam from their eyes and aspect.

Some writers, drawing their inferences from particular examples, or deceived by over hasty observation, have represented the Hindoo women as dirty and slovenly; but no women can be more attentive, says Forbes, to cleanliness than the Hindoos. "They take every method to render their persons delicate,

[41] Bory de Saint-Vincent, Essai Zoologique sur le Genre Humain, tom. i. p. 226, 228.

soft, and attractive. Their dress is peculiarly becoming; consisting of a long piece of silk or cotton, tied round the waist, and hanging in a graceful manner to the feet, it is afterwards brought over the body in negligent folds; under this they cover the bosom with a short waistcoat of satin, but wear no linen. Their long black hair is adorned with jewels and wreaths of flowers; their ears are bored in many places, and loaded with pearls; a variety of gold chains, strings of pearl and precious stones fall from the neck over the bosom, and the arms are covered with bracelets from the wrist to the elbow; they have also gold and silver chains round the ancles, and abundance of rings on their fingers and toes; among the former is frequently a small mirror. I think the richer the dress the less becoming it appears, and a Hindoo woman of distinction always seems to be overloaded with finery; while the village nymphs, with fewer ornaments, but in the same elegant drapery, are more captivating; although there are very few women, even of the lowest families, who have not some jewels at their marriage[42]."

The same writer, describing the village of Harasar, celebrated for the sanctity of its temple and the beauty of its women, observes that their jetty locks were adorned with jewels, while their garment, which consisted of a long single piece of silk or muslin, put on in graceful folds, fell like the drapery of a Grecian statue[43]. Various fashions prevail, however, in different parts of India. In the kingdom of Attinga, on the Malabar coast, the women go uncovered from the waist upwards. It is thought indecent to do otherwise; and Grose tells a story, which was afterwards confirmed to Forbes upon the spot, of a Malabar woman, who, living with an English lady at Anjengo, to please her mistress, dressed in the Eu-

[42] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 74. [43] Ibid. p. 190, 191.

ropean fashion, but appearing afterwards in the queen of Attinga's presence with her breasts covered, the barbarous despot ordered them to be cut off, for what she was pleased to consider so signal a mark of disrespect[44]. It is not the inferior classes merely who dress thus sparingly; the greatest princesses are clothed in the same style, and only differ from their slaves by wearing a more transparent muslin and a greater profusion of jewels. Even where persons are accustomed, as they are in several of the southern provinces of the Peninsula, to wear clothing on the upper part of the body, the rules of politeness require, even in women, that they shall uncover the shoulders and breast when addressing any person whom they respect, whether male or female[45]. It was the breach of this rule of good-breeding by the Malabar woman that roused the anger of the female despot of Attinga.

The kind of tissue which, in the south, forms the sole garment of the Brahmini women, is only used in female dress. It is usually from eight to ten yards in length and about a yard broad, of every variety of quality and colour, with a border of different hue at each extremity. This is wrapped twice or three times round the body, and forms a kind of petticoat, which in front falls as low as the feet, but behind does not reach lower than the calf of the leg, and sometimes not so low. One end of this long web is fastened at the waist, the other, in many districts, passes over the head, shoulders, and breasts; but this is an innovation. The primitive fashion, throughout the Peninsula, required the woman always to appear naked to the girdle[46].

[44] Grose, Voyage to the East Indies; Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 391.

[45] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 211.

[46] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 220, 221. "Even the women

In Malabar the dress of the women is quite similar to that of the men. "Their black, glossy hair, tied in a knot on the middle of the head, is copiously anointed with cocoa-nut oil, and perfumed with the essence of sandal, mogrees, and champahs; their ears, loaded with rings and heavy jewels, reach almost to their shoulders; this is esteemed a beauty. Instead of a small gold wire in the orifice, as is practised in other countries, the incision is filled with a filament from the cocoa-nut leaf, rolled round; the circles are increased until the orifice sometimes exceeds two inches in diameter, the ear is then healed, and being stretched to the perfection of beauty, is filled with rings and massy ornaments. Round the waist they wear a loose piece of muslin, while the bosom is entirely exposed; this is the only drapery of the Malabar women: but they are adorned with a profusion of gold and silver chains for necklaces, mixed with strings of Venetian and other gold coins; they have also heavy bangles, or bracelets; a silver box, suspended by a chain on one side, forms a principal ornament, and contains the areca or betel nut, with its appendages of chunam, spice, and betel-leaf. Their skin is softened by aromatic oils, especially among the Nairs and Tetees, who are peculiarly attentive to cleanliness in their persons [47]."

In Northern India, where the power and example of the Mohammedans have operated so many other changes in the manners of the Hindoos, even the national costume has undergone various modifications. Here the dress of the women consists of a close jacket with sleeves, which, in some instances, reach no farther than the elbow, in others, cover even the tops of the fingers. This jacket, fitting tight to

(native Hindoos) have no clothing above the waist." Report from the Lords, July 8th, 1830, p. 119.

[47] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 390.

the shape, and showing to advantage the beauty of the form, with women of rank is made of rich silk. "Instead of drawers, some ladies," says Abul Fazl, "wear a *lengha*, stitched on both sides, and fastened with a belt, which appears to be a short under-petticoat; no chemise. Over the lengha is worn the common shalice, or petticoat. Some ladies wear veils and long drawers [48]."

Mrs. Heber, describing some young Cingalese women, whom she saw at an English church in Ceylon, observes, "Their dress in shape resembled that worn by the Portuguese Christians in Calcutta; but the petticoat and loose body were made of the finest muslin and silk, trimmed with lace, while their long, black hair was turned up *à la Grecque*, and fastened with gold ornaments." The Malay girls, she observes, wore long, flowing, white veils [49].

It may not, perhaps, be unentertaining to introduce here the description of the costume of a northern mountaineer, inhabiting those parts of the Himâlaya where the manners of the Hindoos and Tatars appear to mingle and slide into each other. "An *Uniya* woman," says Mr. Moorcroft, "wife of one of the goatherds, very good-naturedly filled the water-vessels of those persons who came to the little well, and did not take up her own part till the different candidates for water received the quantity which they asked for. She had rather a pleasing countenance, was of middle stature, and about thirty-five years old. There was much of curiosity in her looks at seeing us, but nothing of fear or impertinence. Her dress was woollen, and of the same form with that of the men. Her boots were likewise woollen, and much diversified by patches of various hues. Her hair, which was of a deep black, was plaited in tresses from the

[48] Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 521.
[49] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 161, 162.

forehead down to below the waist, where the plaits, to the number of fifty, after each being terminated by a cowrie shell, were assembled in a band of leather, which was tipped with a tassel of red worsted thread. Her head-lappet, if I may so name it, was of leather, and extended from the forehead down the back to the waist, but in the latter part gradually ended in a point; at the forehead it was bordered with silver, and from this rim hung seven rows of coral beads, each row consisting of five, which were terminated by seven silver *timâshâs*, that played upon the forehead. The crown of the lappet was studded with small pearls, distributed in seven rows, and the lower part was decorated with green stones, something like turquoises, but marbled with coral beads, and many bands of silver and of a yellow metal, probably gold, about a finger's breadth. A stiff band of leather, something like a soldier's collar, was placed loosely round her neck, and ornamented with five rows of coral beads. The collar was secured with a button and clasp of silver. In her left ear was a coral bead set in silver, and in her right were two smaller beads in the same material. On her right thumb she wore a square gold ring, with characters engraved on the table[50]."

In Rajast'han the costume varies in each province and tribe, though the materials of dress are everywhere the same; in summer cotton, in winter quilted chintz or broadcloth. The ladies have only three garments: "the *ghagra*, or petticoat; the *kanchli*, or corset; and the *dopati*, or 'scarf,' which is occasionally thrown over the head as a veil[51]." Tattooing, which may be regarded as a kind of substitute for dress, has not yet wholly disappeared in India. The Hindoo women, in many parts of the

[50] Asiatic Researches, vol. xii. p. 422, 423.
[51] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. ii. p. 651.

country, paint various figures, chiefly of flowers, on the arms, chin, and cheeks of their daughters. This is effected, as among the South Sea islanders, by making, with the point of a needle, slight punctures in the skin, over which the juice of certain plants is then poured ; and thus the figures become ineffaceable[52]. Many Brahmini women die their whole bodies, or, at least, so much of them as is uncovered, with a saffron-coloured infusion, which, instead of increasing their beauty, renders them frightful, at least, in the eyes of Europeans. The young and beautiful attempt to increase the dark lustre of their eyes by the use of *surmeh*, or powder of antimony, that famous collyrium which played so conspicuous a part in the toilette of the Grecian ladies. To this practice numerous allusions are made in the Sacred Scriptures. Jezebel is said, in the book of Kings, to have painted her eyes with the powder of lead ore ; and the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of Jerusalem under the figure of a courtezan, accuses her of painting her eyes. We find, too, from the practice of Astyages, the Median king, in the Cyropædia, that in Persia, as in India, even men addicted themselves to this custom. Among numerous other curiosities discovered in the catacombs of Sahara, in Egypt, our learned traveller, Dr. Shaw, saw the joint of a common reed, or *donax*, containing an ounce or more of the powder, and one of the bodkins with which the operation was performed. The mineral having been reduced to an impalpable powder, a small wooden bodkin, about the size of a quill, was dipped into it; then introduced under the eyelid, and passed over the eye. When the ladies happened to be a little too liberal in the quantity, the dusky

[52] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 221. They likewise, as all travellers have observed, dye their fingers, the palms of their hands, and the soles of their feet with *henna*.

powder, mingling with the natural moisture of the eye, oozed out at the corners, and deformed the fair faces it was meant to beautify[53]. Such was the practice of antiquity, and such is still the practice of the ladies of Hindoostan; who, moreover, paint with black the border of the eye-lids, and prolong the eye-lashes and eye-brows at the corners. The hair, as has already been observed, is adorned with sweet-scented flowers, and ornaments of gold.

The ornaments of the Hindoo women are rich and numerous. Every toe has its particular ring, so broad above as frequently to conceal the whole toe. Their bracelets are sometimes large hollow rings of gold, more than an inch in diameter, while others wear them flat, and more than two inches in breadth. Round their necks are suspended several chains of gold or silver, or strings of gold, pearl, coral, or glass beads. Many ladies have collars of gold, an inch broad, set with rubies, topazes, emeralds, carbuncles, or diamonds; besides an ornament for the forehead set with jewels; ear-rings, of which there are no less than eighteen species; nose jewels; necklaces; strings of flowers or pearls; belts ornamented with little bells and jewels; and numerous other ornaments of the same costly kind[54].

The dress of the men, in which there are neither buttons, strings, nor pins, is admirably adapted to the climate, and produces, says Ward, a very graceful effect. It differs, however, but little, in many parts of the country, from that of the women. The head is always uncovered, unless in very hot or very cold weather, when they draw their upper garment over

[53] Shaw's Travels in the Levant, p. 230; Dioscorid. iii. 99; Plin. xxxiii. 6; Athenæus, l. xiii. c. 3—6; Institutes of Menu, ch. ii. ver. 178, ch. iv. ver. 152; Dubois, Description, &c. p. 221.

[54] See Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 521, 522.

it like a hood. The shoes worn by the rich are embroidered with gold or silver thread, open at the heels, and curled up at the toes. Few persons wear stockings [55]. In the west of India, turbans are sometimes worn even by the Brahmins, and very commonly by all other persons of the superior classes. The head and beard are generally shaved, but mustachios are worn, and a small lock of hair is usually left upon the crown. A *jâma*, or long gown of white calico, confined round the waist with a fringed or embroidered sash, replaces the simple robe of the eastern provinces; and the princes and nobles adorn their persons with necklaces of pearl and golden chains, sustaining clusters of costly gems; while their turbans are crusted with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. Their golden bracelets are likewise set thick with gems. The shoes are of red leather, or English broadcloth. In the ears they wear, like the women, large gold rings, which pass through two pearls or rubies. Both sexes are greatly addicted to the use of *attar*, and other perfumes.[56]

In Northern India another variety of costume is found. Here the garments of the men consist of "trowsers of every shape and calibre, a tunic girded with a ceinture, and a scarf, form the wardrobe of every Rajpoot. The turban is the most important part of the dress, and is the unerring mark of the tribe; the form and fashion are various, and its decorations differ, according to time and circumstances. The *bala-bund*, or silken fillet, was once valued as the mark of the sovereign's favour, and was tantamount to the courtly 'orders' of Europe. The colour of the turban and tunic varies with the seasons; and the changes are rung upon crimson, saf-

[55] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 186, 187.

[56] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 70, 71, 83.

fron, and purple, though white is by far the most common. Their shoes are mere slippers, and sandals are worn by the common classes. Boots are yet used in hunting and war, made of chamois leather, of which material the warrior often has a doublet, being more commodious and less oppressive than armour. The dagger or poniard is inseparable from the girdle[57]."

The costume of the Zamorin, a prince who reigned on the Malabar coast when Vasco de Gama first arrived in India, was tasteful and elegant. "The Zamorin, who was, says the historian, of a brown complexion, lusty and advanced in years, lay reclined on a sofa covered with white silk wrought with gold, with a rich canopy over his head. He wore a short coat of fine calico, adorned with branches and roses of beaten gold. It was buttoned with large pearls, and the button-holes were of gold thread: about his waist was a piece of white calico, which reached to his knees. On his head was a mitre adorned with jewels; in his ears were jewels of the same kind, and both his toes and fingers sparkled with diamond rings. His arms and legs were naked and adorned with gold bracelets; and in short his person was graceful and his air noble and majestic[58]."

Bishop Heber, giving an account of his visit to an opulent Hindoo, thus describes his reception, with the dress and appearance of his entertainer and his sons. "He himself received us," says he, "at the head of a whole tribe of relations and descendants, on a handsome flight of steps, in a splendid shawl by way of mantle, with a large rosary of coral set in gold, and leaning on an ebony crutch with a gold head. Of his grandsons, four very pretty boys, two were dressed like English children of the same age, but

[57] Colonel Tod, vol. ii. p. 652.

[58] Knox's Collection of Voyages, &c. vol. ii. p. 324.

the round hat, jacket, and trowsers by no means suited their dusky skins so well as the splendid brocade caftans and turbans covered with diamonds, which the two elder wore[59]."

I have already described the *paita*, or thread of investiture, supposed to belong to the three superior castes, but worn indiscriminately by all. This, therefore, being no distinction, the Brahmins resort to other means of making known their rank. Those of the north of the Peninsula are distinguished by a perpendicular line, drawn with the paste of sandal-wood on the middle of the forehead; in the farming districts this line is drawn horizontally, and the Vishnuite Brahmins, who are exceedingly numerous in all the south of India, imprint on their forehead three perpendicular lines, joined at the base, and thus representing the figure of a trident. Of these three lines the middle one is red or yellow, while those on the side are white, and being drawn with a kind of clay, called *nama*, this has grown by degrees to be considered the name of the figure itself. But even the *nama* is assumed by various castes of Sudras, who, in spite of the fancies of various writers, appear to do and wear what they please. The mark of the Sivaïtes is the Lingam, which they either wear stuck in the hair, or suspended to the arm, in a small golden or silver tube. It is also worn suspended by a ribbon from the neck, like the *bulla* of the Roman youth, which was frequently of the same form; or else it is enclosed in a silver box which hangs upon the bosom[60]. The Hindoos abhor pocket handkerchiefs, powder, and wigs, " made up, says Dubois, " of hair, shorn sometimes from a leprous skull, sometimes from that of a prostitute, or

[59] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 235, 236.
[60] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 9, 48, 51, 57. Antiquitates Middletonianæ.

perhaps even of a putrid carcass!" Those shameless Yogis, who, like certain Mohammedan saints, hold every kind of clothing in nearly the same estimation as wigs, wholly depart from the rules of their legislator, who positively commands that a Brahmin shall not even sleep naked[61].

The houses of the rich, in some parts of India, are built of brick, and, like a caravanserai, run round the four sides of a quadrangle. On the north, the sacred point of the Hindoos, stands the family chapel, which contains the household god. The other three sides are occupied by porticoes and apartments for the family. The windows of these apartments are by some writers described as mere air-holes, "through which the women may be seen peeping, as through the gratings of a jail." During the great festivals, an awning is extended over the whole court, as is the fashion, according to Dr. Shaw, in Barbary, where the houses are erected on the same plan; and here the common people are admitted, while those of superior rank occupy the verandahs. The dwellings of the middling classes are constructed in the same style, but with different materials; the walls being of mud, the roofs of bamboo and thatch. A damp, wretched hut, containing but one room, is the usual dwelling of the poor in Bengal[62].

In the Mysore the poor would seem to be more comfortably lodged; for the mud with which they build their huts, a reddish ferruginous clay intermixed with small fragments of quartz, and other materials of decayed granite, forms a wall, which, with ordinary care, will resist the rains for many years. "So good is it," says Buchanan, "that in many towns and villages the houses have flat roofs terraced with this

[61] Institutes of Menu, ch. iv. ver. 75.
[62] Ward, View of the History, &c. vol. i. p. 192.

mud, which is laid on in the dry season, and turns the rain very well." The buildings erected with this clay have a very tolerable appearance, the surface of the walls being neatly smoothed, and, like the houses of the ancient cities of Italy and France, painted with alternate vertical stripes of red and white. These huts are in the form of a parallelogram, without chimneys or windows. The rich, instead of enlarging the house, merely erect several huts in the same style[63]. In many cases the rooms are white-washed within, and the houses roofed with tiles. They are "in general clean, and, had they any windows, would be comfortable." In Malabar the huts "called *chera*, are like bee-hives, and consist of a circular mud-wall, about three feet high, which is covered with a long conical roof of thatch. Contrary to what might have been expected in a hot climate, but agreeable to the custom of almost all Hindoos, one small door is the only outlet for smoke, and the only inlet for air and light. Each family has a hut for sleeping, another for cooking, and a third for a storehouse. Wealthy men add more huts to their premises; but seldom attempt at any innovation in the architecture of the country[64]."

The *agrarums*, or *grâmas*, villages occupied by the *Puttar* Brahmins in Malabar, are remarkable for their taste. "The houses are built contiguous, in straight streets; and they are the neatest and cleanest villages that I have seen in India. The beauty, cleanliness, and elegant dress of the girls of the Brahmins add much to the look of these places. Their greatest defect is, that the houses are thatched with palm-leaves, which never can be made to lie close, and which render them very liable to fires, that, when they happen, generally consume the whole

[63] Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 33, 38.
[64] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 192.

grâmas." "The houses of the Namburis, Nairs, and other wealthy persons, are much better than those usually met with in the villages of India. They are built of mud, so as generally to occupy two sides of a square area, that is a little raised, and kept smooth, clean, and free from grass. The mud is of an excellent quality, and in general is neatly smoothed, and either whitewashed or painted. These higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing; but they are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed, except among the slaves and lowest orders; and the Nair women are remarkably careful by repeated washings with various saponaceous plants, to keep their hair and skins free from every impurity, a thing very seldom sufficiently attended to among the natives of India[65]."

In other parts of Malabar the houses are two stories high, built with stone, and thatched with cocoa-nut leaves. Windows, also, though very diminutive ones, are more common on this coast than in other parts of India[66]; so that the Abbé Dubois is not quite correct in stating that the use of windows is unknown to the Hindoos[67]. The kitchen is always situated in the part of the house least accessible to strangers, whose very look, according to the prejudices of the natives, would pollute their earthen vessels, and compel them to break them. The position of the hearth is generally on the south-west side of the dwelling, because, in their opinion, the dwelling of the god of fire is in that quarter: a peculiar divinity presides over each

[65] Buchanan, Journey, vol. ii. p. 352, 353.

[66] Ib. p. 420, 471, vol. iii. p. 99.

[67] Description, &c. p. 205. Ward, too, appears to entertain such an opinion. He describes their windows as mere air-holes.

of the eight points of the compass. It not being customary for men, unless they happen to be near relations, to visit the female part of the family, to avoid the necessity of introducing strangers into the apartments where they are usually occupied with household affairs, verandahs or alcoves are constructed both within and without the principal gate of entrance; in these the men assemble, and sitting cross-legged on the floor, converse on business, religion, politics, receive visitors, "or pass their time in empty talk[68]."

Somerset House, the British Museum, the Louvre, and many other palaces and houses both in England and France, represent exactly, in point of form, the common dwellings of the wealthy Hindoos, whether they be erected of stone or of mud. Even in Rajpootana the same style prevails. The mansions of the Rajpoots, Colonel Tod observes, are quadrangular piles, with an open paved area, the suites of apartments carried round the sides, with latticed or open corridors extending parallel to each suite. The residence of the Rana of Oodipoor might not, perhaps, lose greatly by a comparison with Windsor Castle; and is very much superior, both in taste and magnificence, to the Chateau of the Tuileries. "The palace is a most imposing pile, of a regular form, built of granite and marble, rising at least a hundred feet from the ground, and flanked with octagonal towers, crowned with cupolas. Although built at various periods, uniformity of design has been very well preserved; nor is there in the east a more striking or more majestic spectacle. It stands on the very crest of a ridge running parallel to, but considerably elevated above the margin of the lake, The terrace, which is at the east end and chief front of the palace, extends throughout its length, and is

[68] Dubois, *ubi supra.*

supported by a triple row of arches from the declivity of the ridge. The height of this arcaded wall is full fifty feet; and although all is hollow beneath, yet so admirably is it constructed, that an entire range of stables is built on the extreme verge of the terrace, on which the whole personal force of the Rana, elephants, horse and foot, are often assembled. From this terrace the city and the valley lie before the spectator, whose vision is bounded only by the hills shutting out the plains, while from the summit of the palace nothing obstructs its range over lake and mountain[69]."

In several districts of Rajpootana the houses are built with a red sand-stone, and, wood being scarce and dear, have likewise roofs of stone, which are supported by numerous slender pillars. The façade, in many instances, is coated with marble chunam; and the whole surrounded by a flower-garden, intersected by neat stone channels, through which the water is conducted, for irrigation, from a tank. Bishop Heber, describing one of these gardens, observes: "some of the trees were of great size and beauty, and the whole place, though evidently uninhabited, was kept in substantial repair, and not the less beautiful in my eyes because the orange-trees had somewhat broken their bounds; the shade of the flowering plants assumed a ranker luxuriance, and the scarlet blossoms of the pomegranate trailed more widely across our path than was consistent with the rules of exact gardening. At the further end of the garden we found ourselves on the edge of a broad moat, with some little water still in it, surrounding an old stone-built castle with round towers and high ramparts of stone[70]."

Rajpoot villages are frequently situated on the

[69] Annals of Rajas'than, vol. i. p. 474, 475.
[70] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 372.

slopes of hills or rocky eminences, and surrounded by groves, or numerous scattered trees. Here, through the soft fleecy mists of the morning, large herds of deer may often be seen grazing; while the branches of the fruit-tree groves swarm with wild peacocks. In Marwar the construction of the villages differs entirely from any thing elsewhere seen in India, and approaches, in physiognomy, the wigwams of the western world. Each commune is surrounded by a circumvallation of thorns, which, with the stacks of chaff rising above it at intervals, has the appearance of a respectable fortification. These stacks of chaff, intended to supply the cattle with provender in scanty rainy seasons, are erected to the height of twenty or thirty feet, and are coated with a cement of earth and cow-dung, with a sprinkling of thorns, which are added to keep away the birds from roosting in them. If fresh coated occasionally, they will endure ten years, and when necessity requires them to be eaten the "kine may be said to devour the village walls." These villages, picturesquely scattered through the plain, break very agreeably the monotony of the desert. Near the banks of rivers the houses are sometimes thatched with bulrushes, which grow to the height of ten feet[71]."

In the country above the Ghauts, the villages are fortified in a different style. Every collection of houses, however small, is defended by a round wall, or rather tower, of stone, sometimes forty feet in diameter, and six feet high. This is surmounted by a parapet of mud, in which there is a door that can be approached only by a ladder. Into this tower the inhabitants, on the appearance of a plundering party, retire with their families and most valuable effects; and having drawn up the ladder, defend

[71] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 700, 773; Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. ii. p. 351, 357, 368, 372, 374.

themselves by hurling down stones upon the assailants, in which they are vigorously aided by their women. More populous villages have square forts, flanked by round towers, which may, in some cases, deserve the name of a citadel. A circumvallation of mud is likewise thrown up around the villages. Thus only can they pass their lives in security. In many places the villages are defended, as in Ajmere, by hedges, which rise very high and thick, so as almost entirely to conceal the mud wall. These hedges greatly contribute to enliven the prospect, which is further adorned by the mangoes and other fruit-trees that usually grow around a village. To give notice of the approach of banditti, one or two men keep watch in a tower; and on the first alarm the villagers fly to arms, retire to their forts, and there defend themselves to the utmost. In times of famine, which are not unfrequent, the inhabitants of one village sometimes endeavour to prolong life by making incursions into the territories of their neighbours, chiefly during the darkness of the night. The expectation of nocturnal attacks, therefore, keeps up a perpetual state of alarm; and every man lies down at night with feelings like those of the soldier encamped in the vicinity of a hostile army. Such fortifications would be incapable of resisting the attacks of a regular battering train; but they enable the peasantry, women, and all, to stone with great intrepidity the irregular cavalry of the native princes[72].

In Guzerat, where the fear of war and robbery are not quite so present to the imaginations of the peasantry, the villages are open, and the inhabitants more at their ease. "The villages in the Dhuboy pergunnah," says Forbes, "generally consist of thatched cottages, built of mud, and a few brick-houses with tiled roofs; a small dewal, a mosque,

[72] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 32 37, 41, 278, 400.

and sometimes a choultrie, are the only public buildings. Near the large villages there is generally a tank or lake, where the rain is collected, for the use of the cattle in the dry season; when, for the space of eight months, not a single shower falls, and no water is to be met with except in these reservoirs: they are often inclosed with strong masonry, and their banks adorned by banian, mango, and tamarind trees, to shade the weary traveller, and lessen evaporation. The tanks are constructed at the expense of government, or by an assessment on the villages; they also contribute to the masonry of a good well and cistern for cattle, when the large reservoirs fail. Sometimes these useful works are private acts of charity, from a rich individual, as instanced in the noble works of Govindsett, in the Concan. Large wells with a grand flight of steps down to the water are not uncommon in remote situations, where travellers, merchants, and caravans are obliged to pass, far from other supplies." After expatiating on the value of these blessings in the torrid zone, he continues,—" Hospitality to travellers prevails throughout Guzerat; a person of any consideration passing through the province is presented, at the entrance of a village, with fruit, milk, butter, firewood, and earthen pots for cookery: the women and children offer him wreaths of flowers. Small bowers are constructed on convenient spots, at a distance from a well or lake, where a person is maintained, by the nearest villages, to take care of the water-jars, and supply all travellers gratis. There are particular villages where the inhabitants compel all travellers to accept of one day's provisions; whether they be many or few, rich or poor, European or native, they must not refuse the offered bounty[73]."

The villages on the banks of the Ganges, though

[73] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 413—415.

merely a collection of mud-walled, thatched cottages, covered, however, in many instances, with a creeping plant bearing a beautiful broad leaf, of the gourd species, being embosomed in groves of coco-palms, banyan, and other trees, have a highly picturesque and rural appearance. A little graceful temple, generally of Siva, in a style almost Gothic, considerably increases the beauty of the scene. In one of these villages Bishop Heber, on his first sailing up the Ganges, observed the appearance of an Indian farmyard and homestead: "In front," he says, "was a small mud building, with a thatched verandah looking towards the village, and behind was a court filled with cocoa-nut husks, and a little rice straw; in the centre of this was a round thatched building, raised on bamboos about a foot from the ground, which they said was a *goliah*, or granary; round it were small mud cottages, each to all appearance an apartment in the dwelling. In one corner was a little mill, something like a crab-mill, to be worked by a man, for separating the rice from the husk. By all which we could see through the open doors, the floor of the apartments was of clay, devoid of furniture and light, except what the door admitted [74]."

We borrow from the same traveller, the description of a native village in the north of Bengal. It is quite a picture, in the style of the Dutch artists, and contrasts agreeably with the sombre scenes which we have contemplated in the Mysore, and the country above the Ghauts. "We arrived at Bogwangola between four and five, and stopped there for the night. I found the place very interesting, and even beautiful: a thorough Hindoo village without either Europeans or Musulmans, and a great part of the houses mere sheds or booths for the accommodation of the *gomastas* (agents or supercargoes), who come

[74] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 18.

here to the great corn fairs, which are held, I believe, annually. They are scattered very prettily over a large green common, fenced off from the river by a high grassy mound, which forms an excellent dry walk, bordered with mangoe-trees, bamboos, and the date-palms, as well as some fine banyans. The common was covered with children and cattle; a considerable number of boats were on the beach, different musical instruments were strumming, thumping, squeeling, and rattling from some of the open sheds, and the whole place exhibited a cheerfulness, and, though it was not the time of the fair, an activity and bustle which were extremely interesting and pleasing. The houses were most of them very small, but neat, with thin walls of mats, which, when new, always look well. One in particular, which was of a more solid construction than the rest, and built round a little court, had a slip of garden surrounding its exterior, filled with flowering shrubs, and inclosed by a very neat bamboo railing. Others were open all round, and here two parties of the fakir musicians, whose strains I had heard, were playing, while in a house near one of them were some females, whose gaudy dresses and forward manner seemed pretty clearly to mark their profession as the Nâch girls of the place [75]."

We have elsewhere described the beautiful aspect of Benares, when viewed from the plain, on the opposite side of the river. It is, perhaps, of all Hindoo cities, not excepting Gaya, or the capital of Cutch, in every respect the most original in its features. Here, therefore, we may expect to find, if any where, the genuine Hindoo style of domestic architecture, in which, according to the Abbé Dubois, the use of windows is not recognised. Bishop Heber, who has assisted to destroy so many other prejudices respect-

[75] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 239, 240.

ing the people of India, has given, in his easy graphic style, an admirable description of the dwelling of an opulent citizen of Benares. It belonged, at the period of his visit, to two minors[76]. The house, he observes, "was a striking building, and had the advantage, very unusual in Benares, of having a vacant area of some size before the door, which gave us an opportunity of seeing its architecture. It is very irregular, built round a small court, two sides of which are taken up by the dwelling-house, the others by offices. The house is four lofty stories high, with a tower over the gate, of one story more. The front has small windows of various forms, some of them projecting on brackets and beautifully carved, and a great part of the wall itself is covered with carved patterns of sprigs, leaves, and flowers, like an old-fashioned paper. The whole is of stone, but painted a deep red. The general effect is by no means unlike some of the palaces at Venice as represented in Canaletti's views. We entered a gateway similar to that of a college, with a groined arch of beautifully rich carving, like that on the roof of Christ-church gateway, though much smaller. On each side is a deep richly carved recess, like a shrine, in which are idols with lamps before them, the household gods of the family. The court is covered with plantains and rose trees, with a raised and ornamented well in its centre; on the left hand a narrow and steep flight of stone steps, the meanest part of the fabric, without balustrades, and looking like the approach to an English granary, led to the first story. At their foot we were received by the two young heirs, stout little fellows of thirteen and twelve, escorted by their uncle, an immensely fat Brahmin Pandit, who was the spiritual director of the family, and a little shrewd looking, smooth spoken, but vulgar and impudent man, who called himself their Moon-

[76] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 376—378.

shee. They led us up to the show-rooms, which are neither large nor numerous ; they are, however, very beautifully carved, and the principal of them, which occupies the first floor of the gateway, and is a square with a gothic arcade round it, struck me as exceedingly comfortable. The centre, about fifteen feet square, is raised and covered with a carpet, serving as a divan. The arcade round is flagged, with a good deal of carving and ornament, and is so contrived that on a very short notice, four streams of water, one in the centre of each side, descend from the roof like a permanent shower-bath, and fall into stone basins sunk beneath the floor, and covered with a sort of open fret-work, also of stone. These rooms were hung with a good many English prints of the common paltry description which was fashionable twenty years ago, of Sterne and poor Maria, (the boys supposed this to be a doctor feeling a lady's pulse,) the Sorrows of Werther, &c., together with a daub of the present Emperor of Delhi, and several portraits in oil of a much better kind, of the father of these boys, some of his powerful native friends and employers, and of a very beautiful woman of European complexion, but in an eastern dress, of whom the boys knew nothing, or would say nothing more than that the picture was painted for their father by Lall-jee of Patna. I did not indeed repeat the question, because I knew the reluctance with which all eastern nations speak of their women ; but it certainly had the appearance of a portrait, and as well as the old Baboo's picture, would have been called a creditable painting in most gentlemen's houses in England."

Bishop Heber had, no doubt, often heard the pretended aversion of the Hindoos for every thing foreign advanced as a reason why no improvement in the arts and comforts of life can be expected to

take place among them; and in his correspondence he assiduously labours to destroy this fatal impression. He observes, among other things, that they have long begun to adopt in Calcutta and elsewhere the European style of architecture. Many wealthy natives possess houses quite in the Grecian taste. "There is," he observes, "an obvious and increasing disposition to imitate the English in every thing, which has already led to very remarkable changes, and will probably to still more important. The wealthy natives now all affect to have their houses decorated with Corinthian pillars and filled with English furniture. They drive the best horses and the most dashing carriages in Calcutta. Many of them speak English fluently, and are tolerably read in English literature; and the children of one of our friends I saw one day dressed in jackets and trousers, with round hats, shoes and stockings[77]."

The furniture of the Hindoo is exceedingly simple: their ordinary plates and dishes are formed from the leaf of the plantain-tree, or of the nymphæa lotus, that beautiful lily which abounds in every lake. These are neatly sewn together with some grassy fibre; but, however neatly fashioned, are never used a second time. Even in the houses of the Nairs, which are neater and better kept than ordinary, you find little beyond a few mats, earthen pots, grindstones, and utensils for cleaning the rice, with a swing for the amusement of the family. A few earthen pots, and two jars, the one for the water, the other for oil, comprise the whole stock of a villager. The cooking utensils are sometimes of brass or copper, as are likewise their drinking vessels, which are made with a spout, that they may pour out the water in a small stream, as in drinking it is thought indelicate to touch the vessel with their lips. Even in the superb dwel-

[77] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 252.

lings of the Rajpoot nobles, where the painted and gilded ceiling is supported by columns of serpentine, and the walls are lined with mirrors, marble, or china, no costly furniture, no hangings, no chairs, tables, beds, couches, or candelabra, are to be seen. The floors are covered with soft rich carpets, over which, to preserve their glowing freshness, a white cloth is spread; and here the Rajpoot sits and sleeps. However, we find that on the coast of Malabar a different fashion sometimes prevails. The hall, in the Zamorin's palace, into which Vasco de Gama and his companions were conducted on their first arrival, was set round with seats, rising one above another, like those of an amphitheatre; the floor was covered with a rich carpet; the walls were hung with silk tapestry interwoven with gold; and there were sofas for the prince and his guests. Neat little bedsteads of cane, manufactured by the hill tribes, are in use in many parts of India; as are likewise chairs and tables; but these are not common.

END OF VOL. I.

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